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## THIS ISSUE 03/12

#### **Back to basics**

found myself looking at bike riding through the eyes of a novice this weekend, and was amazed at how much I take for granted. From clothing choices, to gear selection and traffic sense, things that are second nature for those of us who ride all the time are big decisions for someone who hasn't ridden a bike in 10 years.

It was a relative of mine who has been cajoled in to riding next year's RideLondon for charity by his work colleagues, who needed a bit of assistance. I could hardly say no.

He knows how to ride a bike, and is a fairly active, sporty person, but we still had to go back to basics for many skills. Rather embarrassingly, I soon found myself struggling to explain some of the most run-of-the-mill things we do when riding. I mean, how do you tell someone to change on to the inner chainring when they don't know what a chainring is?

It was the same for pedalling — try succinctly explaining the benefits of a smooth cadence to someone who's never even used STI gear levers before.

After an hour's riding, we hadn't covered much more than 12 miles (I didn't Strava the ride) and I couldn't help feeling that as his teacher I'd let him down. At least we both stayed upright despite some damp, slippery roads.

With eight months to go he's got a lot of work to do, and I'm

left thinking he might ditch me for a better coach.

> Simon Richardson Editor



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## Clancy's Rio dreams under threat

Team pursuit 'man one' to undergo back surgery

Chris Marshall-Bell and Nick Bull

d Clancy's hopes of becoming the first rider to win three Olympic team pursuit gold medals in Rio next summer were dealt another setback this week after he required surgery for a serious back injury.

The 30 year old is said to be "upbeat and positive" about his chances of competing at next summer's Olympic Games, but with just 246 days until they begin, the operation is a significant blow to a rider widely regarded as the best team pursuit 'man one' in the world.

Clancy, who was part of the GB quartet to triumph at the Beijing and London Games in 2008 and 2012, first slipped a disc shortly after September's Tour of Britain as he turned to pick up a bag.

#### **Plenty of time**

He has since missed out on the Track European Championships and the opening round of this winter's UCI Track World Cup series in Cali, Colombia, but his participation at a recent GB altitude training camp (albeit on a significantly lighter schedule to his team-mates) in Tenerife suggested he was on the road to recovery.

However, it was on the Canary Island that he suffered a recurrence of the injury. He pulled out of the GB team for the second World Cup round in Cambridge, New Zealand, which takes place on Saturday and Sunday, and was scheduled to undergo surgery yesterday (Wednesday).

"While it's a blow for him, there's still plenty of time for the Track World Championships in [London in] March and Rio," said John Herety, manager of the JLT-Condor trade team for whom Clancy rides.

"But it's fair to say it's obviously a little bit worrying for Ed himself. He's been going so well, probably the best form he's ever had."

Clancy was not operated on when he first sustained the injury because of the complex nature of the surgery involved. He was given an epidural (spinal injection) but it is believed that Clancy stopped feeling the benefits of this pain relief while in Tenerife.

"One of the reasons why doctors don't like to commit to the surgery [immediately] is because there is a possibility that something could go wrong in that situation," added Herety.

#### **Unsettling**

"The doctor says there is a 90 per cent operation success rate, but it's that 10 per cent that we don't know about.

"But it's a little unsettling and a scary scenario. Ed was all up on being operated on straight away but you have to go with expertise."

Clancy is one of only three riders, including GB team-mate Geraint Thomas and West German athlete Günther Schumacher (in 1972 and 1976), to win back-to-back Olympic team pursuit gold medals.

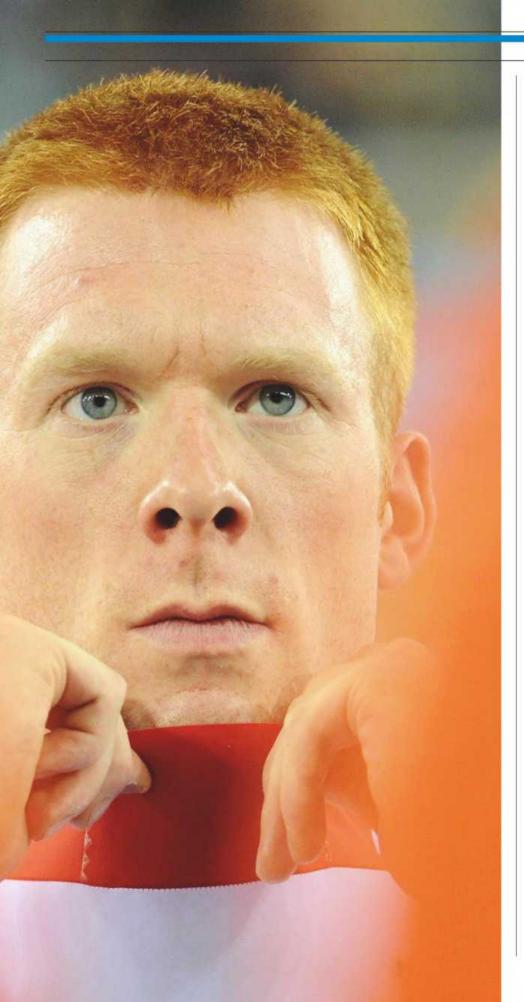
The Yorkshireman also won bronze in the omnium at London 2012, the event in which Mark Cavendish is seeking to earn Britain's sole place for next summer's Rio Games.

#### MY VIEW...

#### **Nick Bull**

#### Cycling Weekly news writer

British Cycling's technical director Shane Sutton isn't wrong when he described Ed Clancy's ongoing absence from the GB squad as "a big loss". When it comes to getting a team pursuit quartet out of the gate and up to speed in that opening lap, there are few as good as Clancy.



## South Africa welcomes Cavendish

Nick Bull

Mark Cavendish met his new Dimension Data team-mates in Cape Town, South Africa, last week at a training camp that coincided with the team being granted a UCI WorldTour licence.

The camp was the 30-year-old Manxman's first official gathering with the riders and staff who will be part of the team as it changes from its current MTN-Qhubeka incarnation for 2016.

Cavendish and his team-mates climbed Table Mountain on foot and met many of the new squad's sponsors during the camp.

"He's a star here," said team manager Brian Smith. "I travelled over to South Africa with him, and when he landed he barely needed to show his passport. People were coming up to him asking for pictures. They know who Mark Cavendish is."

The team's new WorldTour status gives them automatic entry to the three Grand Tours, and also obliges them to compete in the sport's 24 other top-ranked events, beginning with the six-stage Tour Down Under from January 19.

Cavendish's participation for Great Britain in the final round of this winter's UCI Track World Cup, in Hong Kong, on January 16 and 17 — required as part of the Olympic qualification process — will likely delay the start of his road season until the end of that month.

"We're looking at his schedule, it has been discussed," added Smith. "His season may start at the Cadel Evans Road Race [on January 31], although flying him home after Hong Kong and then taking him to the Dubai Tour [February 3-6, which he won in 2015] is also an option."





Yorkshire among potential bidders to host first World Championships in Britain since 1982

Richard Abraham

he Road World Championships could be coming to the UK by 2020, with Yorkshire the front-runners to host it, after the government announced support for a British bid last week.

The Chancellor, George Osborne, declared support in the government's Comprehensive Spending Review, along with a 29 per cent funding increase for UK Sport, the organisation which provides funding for sports' national governing bodies, including British Cycling.

Following previous backing from the Chancellor in February, Yorkshire has emerged as the front-runner to bid for the event. After hosting the Grand Départ of the 2014 Tour de France and launching the first edition of the Tour de Yorkshire this year, the county could welcome the Road Worlds by 2019. British Cycling chief executive Ian Drake and Welcome to Yorkshire tourism boss Sir Gary Verity both welcomed the Chancellor's announcement, with Drake adding that BC would push for further investment in cycle sport facilities.

#### Local cash injection

"The government knows that the highest priority in our major events strategy is ensuring a participation legacy for the sport," Drake said. "We believe this process can inject £640m into the economy and create new closed road facilities and cycle sport hubs to serve millions of people across the country."

A bid to host the World Championships must be put to the UCI through British Cycling. CW understands that other parts of the UK, including Surrey, Merseyside and Scotland, have also expressed an interest in bidding for the nine-day event.

The Worlds last took place in Great Britain in 1982, when Giuseppe Saronni and Britain's own Mandy Jones won the rainbow jerseys in Goodwood, West Sussex. Qatar and Bergen, Norway, will host the 2016 and 2017 events respectively, with Austria emerging as possible hosts for 2018.

Meanwhile cycling charities Sustrans and CTC lambasted the Chancellor for slashing funding for cycling as transport to just £300m over the next five years.

"The government will simply not be able to keep manifesto commitments to double cycling and reduce those killed and injured on our roads," said Jason Torrance, policy director at Sustrans.

"We saw the Prime Minister's 'Cycling Revolution' punctured by his friend, the Chancellor, George Osborne, and we can't even afford a puncture repair kit," said CTC chief executive Paul Tuohy.

## Wyman back to winning ways

British cross star ends 11-month drought with victory in Belgium



Chris Marshall-Bell

elen Wyman took her first cyclo-cross victory in almost 11 months as she conquered the mud to win the Flandriencross on Sunday.

The Kona rider led for almost the entirety of the race in Hamme, Belgium, which was the third round of the Bpost Bank Trofee series.

The 34-year-old, whose last race win was in the British National Championships in January, took victory ahead of the Belgian World Cup leader Sanne Cant (Enertherm-BKCP). Her compatriot Nikki Harris (Telenet-Fidea) was third, making it two British riders on the podium.

Wyman made her winning attack when the main contenders brought back the early attackers, and she navigated the "super-muddy" conditions to perfection.

"It was not only a relief

but exciting to win again, and in the way I used to win: leading from start to finish," Wyman told *Cycling Weekly*, remembering her 2012 season when she won 14 races.

"I didn't feel great but I made the fewest mistakes. I didn't have any of the fastest laps but I was consistent throughout.

"Sanne was getting close all the time but then she'd lose 10 seconds. A mechanical with two laps to go finished her chase off.

"I love these muddy conditions. I'm hoping Essen [the fourth round of the eightround series] is also like this on Saturday [December 5]."

Harris has picked up eight podium places in the past two months, including third in the European Championships. "Nikki's in super-strong shape," Wyman said. "Nikki and I being up there is really healthy for British cyclo-cross."

## Weekly column Rob Hayles



#### "If you do decide to get your kit on and venture out, do yourself a big favour, and go prepared"

ow we're in December, many of you will face a tough choice whether to stay indoors behind the double glazing, or get out and brave the elements. Well, if you do decide to get your kit on and venture out, do yourself a big favour, and go prepared.

Clothing is an obvious choice this time of year — get your layers wrong and you could be in for a miserable time. Lights should be extremely high on your agenda, even if visibility is good when you leave home. Who knows what the weather may do while you're out, and let's face it, anything past midafternoon and the daylight soon starts to fade.

Take a mobile phone, for you never know what may happen. Tyre choice in the winter can also have a massive influence on your ride: your nice lightweight tubs or clinchers should now be hung up in the bedroom — err, I mean shed — while still on your best wheels as they gather dust.

So which are the best tyres for winter? I just don't know. But I can guarantee that one topic of conversation which comes up on every club run will be about the choice of winter tyre. Cold-weather traction and puncture resistance are the two main areas, and most people will have their own point of view on what they prefer.

So here's mine. Over the years I've spent ages thinking of ways of preventing the mid-ride puncture; from using dead-heavy tyres, to putting old track tubulars instead of standard inner tubes inside a road tyre.

But by far the best solution I have found in recent years is to use some tubeless tyre sealant. Put around 50 millilitres of the white milky solution into each inner tube. This way, if you do get a puncture, you either don't notice or you just have to stop and top up a couple of PSI with your trusty pump.

This has worked for me on many occasions — apart from the time I double-punctured 15 miles from home. I'd split both tyres, rendering my one spare useless. Without a phone, I had to ride all the way, which was about as unpleasant as it got on my alloy rims. The only thing keeping me going was the thought of having no lights and wearing minimal clothing. I was in the North-East, it was approaching 4pm and it was December. As I said before, be prepared.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He's also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor



### **Going the Extra Mile**

www.chainreactioncycles.com



## To do this week...



#### Southborough & District Wheelers New Year's Day 10-mile Time Trial, Bethersden, Kent, Friday, January 1

Combining a family-friendly atmosphere, mince pies and prizes for the fastest and slowest riders, this is a popular and fun 10-mile time trial near Ashford, Kent. Organiser Doug Bentall says the event takes place on a "testing and winding, but not hugely technical course"; Entries can be made via the Cycling Time Trials website. £8 po.st/NYDtt



### Regional Cyclo-Cross Championships, various locations, Sunday, December 6

Four regional cyclo-cross titles, as well as the Welsh and Scottish national crowns, are up for grabs this weekend. The latter takes place around the exposed sand dunes of Irvine Beach, Manchester's urban Heaton Park hosts the North-West Championships while Wales's best will converge upon Eirias Park in Colwyn Bay. www.britishcycling.org.uk/events



### The MBR Adventure Cross 2016 Series, April-October

Comprising five events in England and Scotland, the MBR Adventure Cross returns for its third year in 2016. With routes featuring on- and off-road sections, the series begins with the Moors and Shores in Dalby Forest, Yorkshire, on April 3, before culminating with the Lakeland Monster Miles in Cumbria in mid-October. www.bookmyride.co.uk



#### Rapha Vault, Rapha Cycle Club, Old Spitalfields Market, London

The British brand's second and newest store/cafe combo in London's East End features a special chamber named 'The Vault' that allows riders to test clothing on a static bike. With a range of temperatures from 0 to 30 degrees and wind speeds going up to 30 mph, bookings can be made online and in store.

po.st/RaphaVault



## Guest column Brian Cookson



#### "People say, 'Oh it's always all about the money.' Well, it's pro cycling, the clue's in the name"

got into cycling in the 60s and 70s and back in those days we didn't have much TV coverage: maybe half an hour on ITV on a Saturday afternoon if we were lucky. Now there's almost worldwide access to virtually every event legitimately (or slightly illegitimately thanks to the internet). That's fantastic, but we're seeing the economic situation around some of our traditional events is very challenging, and we're losing them, whether we like it or not.

Meanwhile, just across the road from British Cycling's HQ is the Etihad Stadium. Lots of sponsors from the Gulf are involved in other professional sports. We can't ignore that, we have to acknowledge that, try to bring them in but in a way which defends the heritage of our sport. We are going to see a need to expand cycling around the traditional events, the Classics, Monuments and Grand Tours, and look for new opportunities at the same time.

People say, 'Oh it's always all about the money.' Well, it is. You know, it's professional cycling, the clue is in the name, you have to have income to sustain the professional sport and I don't make any apologies for that. We've got an agreement on the general form of the UCI WorldTour reform for 2017. There won't be any new WorldTour events next year, but we'd like to have a WorldTour event in Germany, USA and Great Britain in future.

I have some fantastic memories of the cycling events at London 2012 so I'm looking forward to the road races in Rio. I also think the UCI Women's WorldTour is one of the most exciting developments since I became president. I'm always wary of a 'big bang' solution but I think it is a really big step forward. We've got TV coverage guaranteed for all the events, with live broadcasts at eight of them, more than 30 days of racing at the highest level with some stage races in this time as well.

Ultimately a women's Tour de France or a women's Tour of Anywhere Else might work, but it's important that women's cycling develops in a way that suits women's cycling, and doesn't always necessarily try to mimic the men's calendar.

I think there are really great positive signs that people can have confidence investing in women's road racing. There is certainly a better spirit of collaboration in the women's scene and that has been a great pleasure to work with.

Rider, commissaire and former *Cycling Weekly* correspondent, Brian Cookson OBE took over as president of the UCI in 2013.

## perfecting the human engine



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## James ready to race again

Track star returns to action after two years of health scares and injury

**Richard Abraham** 

fter almost two years on the sidelines with injury, Becky James has said she finally feels like a cyclist again as she prepares to take part in her first international competition in 21 months.

James will compete at the second round of the Track World Cup in Cambridge, New Zealand, this weekend. It will be the first time she has raced in GB colours since the 2014 World Championships in February last year.

"It's been a long time coming," she told *Cycling Weekly*. "It's only been in the last few weeks that I've actually felt like a cyclist again. It has been a massive bonus for me to actually feel like that."

The 24-year-old from Abergavenny has endured a torrid time since winning world titles in the sprint and keirin at the 2013 World Championships. An operation in April 2014 to remove potentially cancerous cells — flagged up in a routine smear test — was followed by keyhole surgery on a chronic shoulder injury in October

that year and then by four months of rehab for a long-term knee injury at the National Sports Centre at Bisham Abbey, Berkshire.

Only since this September's National Championships has James been able to resume consistent training at a level close to where she was before her injuries.

"When I look back at what I was doing this time last year, I would never have thought I would be back in this position [by now]," she added.

James has maintained her fitness throughout her injuries thanks to hours in the swimming pool — "it was aqua jogging that I was doing; it wasn't very fun" — and strict self-discipline when it comes to her favourite hobby: baking cakes. "I usually save a slice or a cupcake and then I make sure I get it out of the house!" she explained.

She added that the cancer scare and the career-threatening knee injury has renewed her appreciation for riding.

#### **Back on track**

"I'm absolutely loving it, I'm really appreciating how good it is to be back in the team," she said.

James has quickly slotted back into the routine of competition and has worked with British Cycling psychologist Ruth Anderson with the aim of preparing herself mentally for racing. With time she hopes to recapture the dominant form that won her two rainbow jerseys in 2013, but for now she knows not to expect too much, too soon.

"I know the rest of the world will have moved on a lot and I'll be playing catch-up again for the moment," she said. "I'm not putting too much pressure on myself. I just want to go out there and enjoy it and get back into racing again. It will give me a baseline to see where I'm at and move forward."

As for earning enough qualification points for the 2016 Olympic Games and then earning her place as one of a maximum two riders to race at Rio, James, who didn't compete at London 2012, is taking things one step at a time.

"Things are going in the right direction now. I hope they just carry on in the right direction," she said. "I don't want to jinx myself at all. Fingers crossed that each week I can tick off the list means I'm closer to being back to my best."





## CTT to re-measure courses for 2016

## Return to rev counters for more accurate distance measurements

Nick Bull and Sophie Hurcom

fter Richard Bideau was stripped of his British 100-mile record last month, Cycling Time Trials (CTT) last week confirmed a number of courses will be remeasured before 2016 competition commences to ensure accuracy.

Bideau lost his distance benchmark earlier this month after CTT received complaints that data uploaded to the popular GPS-logging website Strava suggested the T1002 course in Stockton-on-Tees to be short.

Since 2014, CTT rules have said that courses can be measured solely using GPS devices, rather than more traditional rev counters that are attached to the front wheel of a bike that is then ridden along them.

Although the T1002's short distance is not believed to stem from the independent use of a GPS device, CTT national secretary Nick Sharpe last week told *Cycling Weekly* that those "which have been measured solely using such devices are going to be remeasured using a rev counter for 2016" to avoid further complaints.

Confirming that the Bideau record is the "only case" relating to short course length currently raised with CTT, Sharpe added: "There aren't many courses that need to be re-measured," although exact numbers were not disclosed.

#### Erratic data

A number of factors can cause GPS distance inaccuracies, be it from too few satellites to help calculate position, signal obstruction or 'cold starts' of a device (in which it acquires signals from satellites for the first time).

Furthermore, Sharpe told *CW* that a recent rev-counter re-measurement of the A100/4 near Uttoxeter, upon which Charles Taylor rode what looks set to be credited as the new 100-mile record in September, showed the course to be of the correct length.

Some riders' Strava uploads from the event showed it to be 99.9 miles. He said: "I am pleased to be able to say that it's been measured at 100.07 miles. Cycling Time Trials is completely satisfied that that course isn't short."

#### Discs given UCI nod of approval

Disc brakes have been given the green light by the UCI for use by men's and women's professional teams from 2016.

From January 1, riders will be allowed to use discs as well as standard brake calipers across all UCI divisions, including the WorldTour. The move follows a two-month trial earlier this year, including at the Vuelta a España.



### Rosslyn to re-stock the trophy cabinet

Members of the Rosslyn Ladies CC (see *CW*, Nov 12) are appealing for help tracing the whereabouts of their club trophies. The club, established in 1922, was one of the first in the UK exclusively for women and donated many of its trophies to local clubs when its focus switched from racing to social riding after the 1960s. Anyone with any information should contact Karen Carr at karen.carr60@btinternet.com.

#### **An Post aiming for WorldTour**

An Post-Chain Reaction has ambitions to become a WorldTour outfit according to the team's DS Kurt Bogaerts. The Irish UCI Continental team agreed a further two-year sponsorship with Chain Reaction in mid-November, and Bogaerts told *CW* he wanted to run a WorldTour squad in the future alongside the development team.

#### **Downing lands JLT DS role**

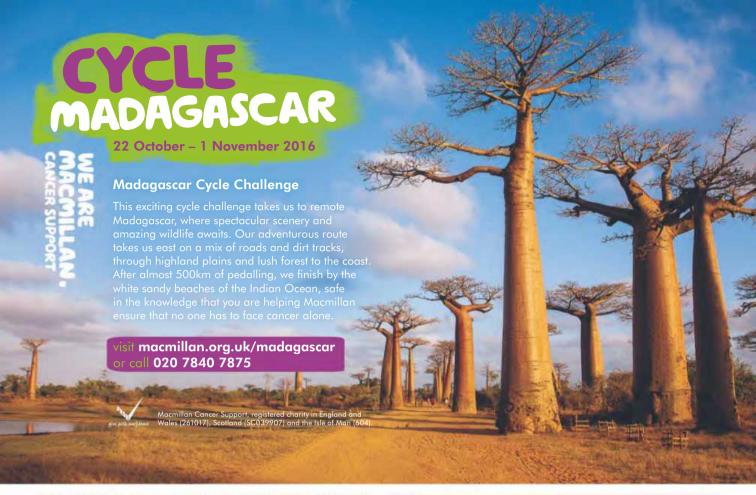
Dean Downing is set to rejoin JLT-Condor next year as an assistant manager, nine years after he became the squad's first-ever signing when it formed in 2007. The Yorkshireman, who retired from racing in 2014, rode for the team from 2007 to 2012. Downing will oversee the team's domestic and European racing in his new role.

#### **Power withdraws from racing**

Highly rated young Australian Robert Power faces an indefinite period off the bike, having been diagnosed with a rare form of bone marrow oedema, a condition where fluid accumulates in the bone. The 20 year old, who finished second at the Tour de l'Avenir in 2014, had signed with Orica-GreenEdge for 2016. Doctors told the *Sydney Morning Herald* it could take Power anywhere between four months and two years to recover.

#### Katusha development pair banned

Two riders from the Katusha development squad have been given one-year bans for anti-doping violations. Andrey Lukonin and Ivan Lutsenko, both 20, have been handed the bans by the Russian Anti-Doping Agency, commencing August 3 this year. Itera-Katusha is a Continental team that forms part of the Russian Global Cycling Project.





















## THE BIG QUESTION

## What is the worst piece of botched bike maintenance you've ever encountered?

A young lad brought in a bike for repair after getting the bottom bracket replaced at a nearby shop. They stripped his bottom bracket shell and pushed the new BB in using Plumber's Mait to keep it in place. Also had a Giant frame from them. BB stripped and they drilled a hole into the shell and inserted a screw to hold the BB in.

Derek Clyde

I took my bike for a service a few weeks ago. When I picked it up and rode off, the gears were rubbing in the 9-10-11 positions. When I took it back, the fella said that's normal as you're not meant to use those gears. Needless to say, not I or any of my cycling friends have been to him since.

Lance Taylor

I once saw a bike that had eight snapped spokes on the rear wheel and the rider had simply duct-taped the snapped ones to the ones next to them and kept riding.

Michael Donnelly

Mountain bike tyre stuffed full of straw to get me home, back in the day.

Sam Bates

I'm a bicycle courier and I prefer to ride



singlespeed bikes for work. I took my bicycle in to get some work done and the mechanic flipped my hub over to fixed gear instead of single speed. I was out in traffic before I realised it and nearly got thrown into a car when I tried to stop pedalling!

Ewok Vrtis

How about the time I forgot my bike shoes for an open 25?!

Oliver Bridgewood [yes, that one]

Flicked up a stick in my rim and it got caught in the derailleur; the stick spun the derailleur 180 degrees round the gears, so I just bent it back but ended up snapping the derailleur.

Cameron Bush

Spraying WD40 on brake pads because they rubbed too much.

Robert Tracey

Front forks turned backwards on internet-bought bikes!? They come with the forks facing backwards to save space in the packaging, and then the buyer simply slots in the wheels and off they go!

Iain Nussey

I managed to overtighten a chainset recently, causing the bottom bracket to fail within two weeks, despite the chainset being clearly marked with torque settings.

Mark James

A mechanic in Plymouth used a heat gun to remove a carbon crank. It died.

Chris Agnew

#### Next week's big question...

What do you think is a sure sign that you are obsessed with cycling?
Reply to us at cycling@timeinc.com or at www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly



### Letters

Letter of the week wins a Lazer 02 helmet worth £69.99



The Rosslyn dynasty

LETTER

Thank you for the wonderful article on the Rosslyn Ladies (CW. Nov 12). My grandmother

was in the Rosslyn in the 1920s and my mother was thrilled to hear about the article and is looking forward to seeing if her mum is in the club run photo.

Nan was in the club when she met my grandfather, who was a member of the University CC; apparently marriages between the two clubs were common.

Cycling stayed in the family, with my mum joining the Buccaneers in the late 40s and after meeting my dad she persuaded him to switch from the Penguin to the Buccs, (he went on to be Eastern Counties five mile track champion in 1954), so a small cycling dynasty (I am woefully behind but my brother is far more competent and is still competing in his 50s) was started at the Rosslyn.

Gary Crowe, email

#### Killer Hill. killer content

I think the latest format for the magazine is the best yet and the first thing I do every week is go to the Killer Hill feature. This is why we love cycling: it's man and machine

I love how Simon Warren can impart to the reader the agony of what it's like to scale the icons and there is one in South Wales that can make some of the ones already featured look like a walk in the park.

versus nature.

It's the 1km climb of Llanguicke Road, leaving the town of Pontardawe, which averages 14 per cent. It hits 20 per cent

gradients straight away and only gets steeper, with a maximum of 35 per cent at midway.

Howard Barnett, Neath

#### Lee Valley loggerheads

Dave Pettitt (CW, Nov 19) responded to my suggestion that parking should be made available for meetings at the Lee Valley Velodrome. However, his letter suggests he has never actually attended an event there. To say that "the links to the velodrome are top notch" and that "the walk from the tube to the velodrome is nearer 10 minutes" is nonsense.

I don't want a multi-storey car park to spoil the view of the velodrome. The developers are already doing that for us with a large apartment block.

All I am asking for is a ground level car park in the extensive open spaces nearby. I don't expect free parking, just something available nearby.

Arthur Harragan, email

#### Preheat your winter ride

Further to your pro winter training tips article (CW, Nov 19) I would like

to pass on an old school tip.

Simply leave your cycling shoes, overshoes and gloves on the radiator until the last minute before you head out the door. This means that your feet and hands are not using what heat they have to heat up cold shoes and gloves before the ride has even started.

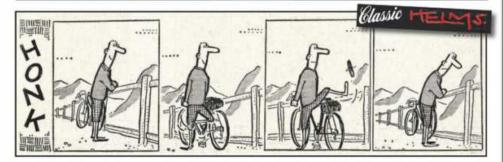
Once your feet are cold they generally stay cold. Don't start out that way!

Mark Jones, Oxford



subscribe online. See pages 26-27 in this issue for details

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Johnny Helms was Cycling Weekly's resident cartoonist from February 1946 until November 2009.

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Editor: Simon Richardson Acting deputy editor: Hugh Gladstone News writers: Nick Bull, Richard Abraham, Sophie Hurcom Acting fitness editor: David Bradford Fitness writer: Paul Knott Tech editor: Symon Lewis

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Simon Richardson, Editor



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## SCANDALS that rocked cycling

From mass disqualifications to unsporting mothers, the history of cycling is filled with shocking incidents, as *Ellis Bacon* explains

s scandals in cycling go, few can beat 'the Lance Armstrong one' for sheer chutzpah and shock-factor. But ever since the birth of bike racing in the second half of the 19th century, plenty of incidents have rocked the sport — in some cases changing the very face of it.

Imagine Chris Froome, Nairo Quintana, Alejandro Valverde and Vincenzo Nibali — the top four finishers at last year's Tour de France — all being disqualified six months later for having taken the train for part of the route, or for clenching corks in their mouths, tied to strings that were tied to cars. It was those very same ludicrous accusations that were levelled at the first four finishers of the 1904 Tour de France. Yet defending champion Maurice Garin — winner of the first-ever Tour the year before — as well as Lucien Pothier, Garin's brother César, and Hippolyte Aucouturier were judged guilty, and the race was awarded to the fifth-placed finisher, Henri Cornet.

Furious race organiser Henri Desgrange almost put a stop to the world's greatest bike race right there and then (it would almost happen again in 1998 following the discovery of a boot-load of drugs in a Festina soigneur's car on the eve of the Tour). A rambunctious Desgrange was at least slightly more forgiving during the 1913 edition when the unfortunate Eugène Christophe broke his forks while on the descent of the Col du Tourmalet on stage six.



Christophe was one of the race favourites, having finished second the year before behind Belgium's Odile Defraye, and a good performance on the day's stage was likely to put him into the race lead. So, with the weight of French expectation on his shoulders, Christophe, sobbing, ran the rest of the way down the mountain to the town of Sainte-Marie-de-Campan. A blacksmith

allowed him to use his tools to hastily repair his forks, yet Christophe was handed a 10-minute time penalty by the organisers — for having allowed the blacksmith's young assistant to operate the bellows for him. Outside assistance was not permitted and, to the disappointment of French fans with the rules having been so harshly applied, Christophe fell out of contention.

### RADIO-CONTROLLED RACING

From Christophe's broken forks to the fork-breaking cobbles that make up the oneday Classic Paris-Roubaix, bike-racing controversy isn't limited to the Tour de France. It's difficult to conceive these days that three riders from

the same team could end up battling it out for the title of a race as prestigious as Roubaix, but at the 1996 edition, a trio of riders from the Italian Mapei-GB squad headed towards the

> race's famed finish on the outdoor velodrome. Who, out of the two Italians, Andrea Tafi and Gianluca Bortolami, and the Belgian, Johan

Museeuw, would win? Why, a phone call between team manager Patrick Lefevere — still the manager of the team's present guise as Etixx-Quick Step — and the main sponsor Mapei's boss, Giorgio Squinzi would decide it, of course!

It was as preposterous then as it sounds now: Squinzi chose Museeuw as the winner, ahead of Bortolami and Tafi; Lefevere conveyed the message to his riders; nothing was done to hide the arrangement as they drifted across the line, celebrating, in the pre-ordained order.

But should a sponsor really be deciding the order of riders across the line, even if all three athletes are riding under their banner? Most fans and journalists certainly didn't think so; it smacked of radiocontrolled cycling, and many thought that the three of them should at least have battled it out so that the best man won. No rules were broken, but this wasn't exactly how anyone - outside of the Mapei-GB team — wanted to see this race won.



There probably aren't too many of today's Tour contenders who you'd trust to have a crack at repairing their own forks on the go, but surely anyone should be rewarded for such skills. But 'rules was rules' back in 1913, no matter how unpopular the decision, and, although the 10-minute penalty was later reduced to three, Christophe eventually finished seventh in Paris.

#### **WORLDS FARCE**

There was no disputing the very real battle for the win that took place between three riders at the 1988 World Championships in Ronse, Belgium, where Italy's Maurizio Fondriest, Canada's Steve Bauer and home hero Claude Criquielion headed for the finish line to duke it out for the medal positions. Yet what happened next bordered on farcical.

to go, Bauer led
out the sprint, and
looked to have the
measure of the
Belgian and the Italian.
But with 75 metres to
go, Criquielion, buoyed
by the crowd, seemed
to remember that there
was a rainbow jersey at
stake, and kicked again,
looking to pass through
the gap between Bauer
and the barriers.

With 200 metres

The Canadian looked down to change gear and veered slightly to



the right as he did so. It was enough to cause Criquielion to wobble, hit the barriers, and go down, his bike hitting Bauer's back wheel which was in turn enough to knock the speed out of the Canadian. Fondriest came around Bauer to become champion of the world. Bauer was subsequently docked his

silver medal for having been judged to have caused Criquielion's crash, and it was to get worse when Criquielion — who had won the 1984 Worlds in Spain, but had missed out on his home turf — tried to sue Bauer for damages, although a judge eventually ruled in Bauer's favour more than three years later.

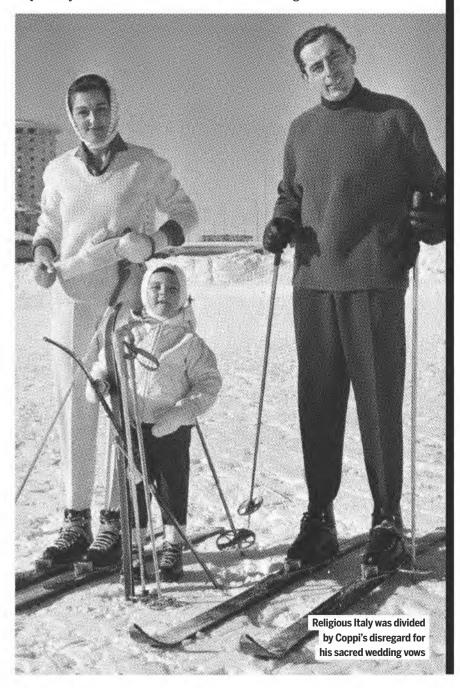
Photos: Yuzuru Sunada, Graham Watson

#### WOMAN IN WHITE

While Beryl and Denise Burton helped push women's racing further into the spotlight (see 'Family strife'), one woman was seen to be scandalising the sport, at least in 1950s Italy. Two riders — Fausto Coppi and Gino Bartali — captured the heart of post-war Italy, and the support was split almost perfectly down the middle: north and south, respectively. Both riders would win the

Tour de France twice, while Coppi won the Giro five times to Bartali's three.

But when Coppi began an extramarital affair with the woman the press dubbed 'the Woman in White' — Giulia Occhini — in 1954, it scandalised a conservative Italy. Even Pope Pius XII got involved, and tried to persuade Coppi to get back together with his wife, Bruna. Coppi and Occhini went on to have a son together — Faustino — in 1955, but many of Coppi's hitherto devoted fans could never forgive him for his transgressions.



#### OBREE V BOARDMAN

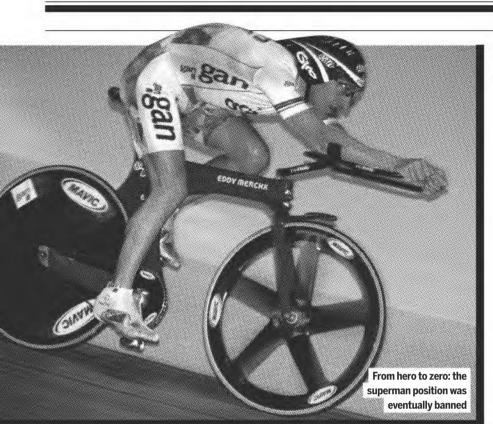
Graeme Obree and Chris Boardman's rivalry on the British domestic time trial scene went global when the two riders went on to trade individual pursuit world titles and Hour records in the 1990s. But while Boardman was science-driven. Obree was more of a one-man band who would build his own bikes and invented not one but two outlandish - and extremely aerodynamic - bike positions, only to see them both banned by the UCI: first his 'praying mantis', arms-tucked-under-his-chest position, which fell foul of the governing body at the 1994 Track World Championships, and then his 'superman' position arms outstretched in front — which was banned in 1996, soon after it had been used to set a new Hour record of 56.375km (and still the furthest any athlete has ridden in an hour) by... Chris Boardman.

#### SILVER SOUTHALL

Controversy at the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam saw Great Britain's Frank Southall win a silver medal, which many insisted should have been gold. Southall was one of the UK's finest time triallists of the time, and would go on to win the British Best All-Rounder title four times in a row between 1930 and 1933.

But at the 1928 Olympic road race, Denmark's Henry Hansen beat Southall by over seven minutes — a huge margin, even when the 'road race' was actually run as a huge 165km time trial. But, if the British team's timings were correct, by far the bulk of that time had been lost during a 30-kilometre section mid-way through the course, which they deemed impossible. Had the Dane taken some kind of shortcut?

A furious GB team lodged an appeal but officials waved it away and the result stood. At the Los Angeles Games in 1932 — Southall had represented Britain at every Olympics and World Championships since 1925 — Southall was a member of the team pursuit squad that finished third, and could add a bronze medal to his silver medal from four years earlier. Gold, however, always eluded him.



#### MAGIC BOTTLE

Trainer James Edward 'Choppy'
Warburton gave Britain its first cycling
world champion in Cologne, Germany,
when his charge — 18-year-old Welsh
rider Jimmy Michael — won gold in the
100-kilometre paced event in 1895. A year
later, Warburton also coached Englishman
Arthur Linton to victory at the BordeauxParis one-day Classic.

The constant in Warburton's riders' victories was Choppy's mysterious 'little black bottle', which he liked to say contained 'magic' — likely illegal stimulants. But when Linton died two months after his Bordeaux-Paris win — officially from typhoid — and Jimmy Michael passed away in 1904 en route to America for a series of races, not to mention Linton's brother's death in 1915 (Tom Linton was also a Warburton client), fingers were pointed at Choppy — who had died in 1897 — and in particular at the exact contents of that little black bottle...

#### **FAMILY STRIFE**

Another champion time triallist can rightfully be remembered as one of Britain's best-ever racing cyclists. Beryl Burton won the women's title no fewer than 25 times in a row between 1959 and 1983. She was also a superb road racer, and won the Worlds road race twice, in 1960 and 1967.

Her record of sportsperson-like behaviour didn't always quite match up to her phenomenal achievements, however. Burton liked to win, even when racing against her own daughter.

Twenty-year-old Denise went up against her 39-year-old mother at the 1976 national road race — a title that Beryl had already won 12 times. In the sprint for the line, Denise edged out her mother (and Morley CC club-mate) to take the title, but Beryl was furious, accusing her daughter of not having worked hard enough in the threewoman breakaway (the Long Eaton Paragon club's Carol Barton was third). Onlookers were shocked to see Beryl refuse to shake Denise's hand on the podium — although mother and daughter later made up, and even went on to set tandem records together.



ion on the right, Denise choosing the country's most promising

Barton the left but young road girls.

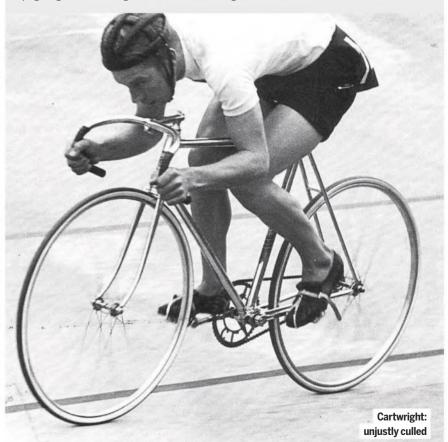
Photos: Offside L'Equipe, Graham, Watson, Jeff Kat

## CARTWRIGHT OUT? Manchester Storm Over Olympic Team D. J. M. J. GHT BACK SUPER CYRIL of the waves.

British cyclist Cyril Cartwright lived life to the full, passing away at the end of September this year, aged 91. His cycling tales alone could fill this magazine, and he's probably best known for his journey with the England squad to the 1950 Empire (now Commonwealth) Games in Auckland, New Zealand, where he won gold in the individual pursuit. To keep up his fitness on the five-week journey there, he set up his rollers on deck, battling to stay upright against the rolling

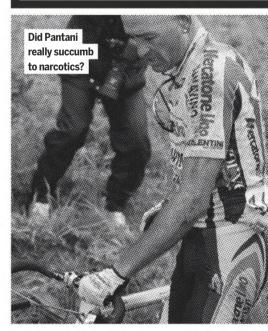
and annoying the ship's captain so much that it was said that he threw Cartwright's bike into the sea. Which wasn't actually true — although the captain did lock the rollers away for the return journey, calling Cartwright "a nuisance".

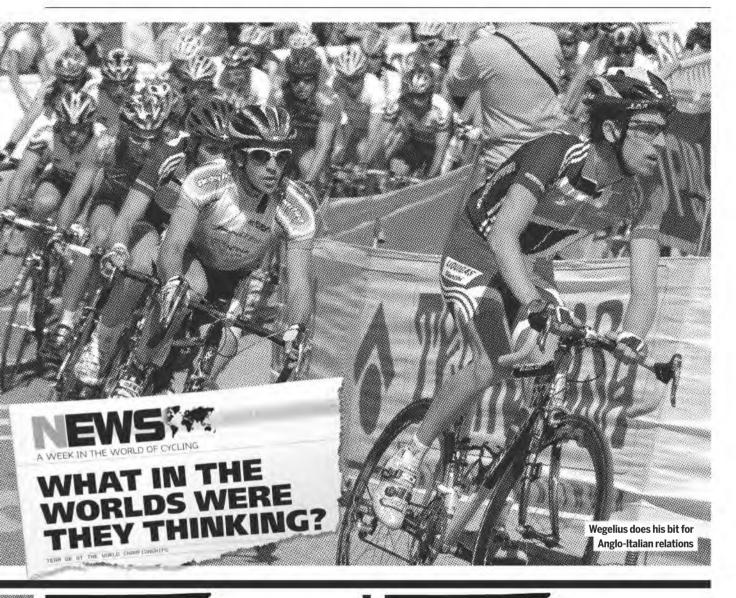
But Cartwright was to be overlooked for the 1952 Olympic Games in a bizarre bureaucratic oversight involving more committees than you could shake a stick at. Cartwright, who initially made the National Cycling Union (NCU) 'Olympic Committee' longlist for the team pursuit, was culled from the squad because his name had been randomly put at the bottom of the list following the addition of another rider by the NCU 'Racing and Records Committee'. Assuming it meant the Manchester Wheelers man was the slowest of the selection, the NCU 'Selection Committee' left him at home. Despite a review of the decision demanded by his club (and a number of editorials in this magazine) Cartwright never went to Helsinki.



#### **NO LOYALTY**

Colluding with the Italians at the World Championships road race in Madrid in 2005 was enough for British riders Tom Southam and Charly Wegelius to be told that they'd never represent Great Britain again, while senior team manager John Herety resigned in the aftermath. At a race run as national squads, working for a rival team was deemed unacceptable. Southam and Wegelius had accepted money to help keep the race together in the early stages for some pals in the Italian team, and, even though Roger Hammond — a sprinter, and the GB team's leader — would have benefited from a bunch gallop, Wegelius and Southam were supposed to have kept their powder dry for as long as possible — not ride for someone else. Herety says that he was absolutely hounded by the British media after the race, but his resignation soon put a stop to that. Yet he never actually fell out with GB cycling boss Dave Brailsford over it all. Southam, meanwhile, did represent a GB team at the Tour of Britain a few years later. Today, Wegelius and Southam work as directeur sportifs at Cannondale-Garmin and Drapac, respectively, while Herety is the long-time manager of the JLT-Condor team.





#### MYSTERIOUS DEMISES

How about a possible murder-mystery or two to elevate bike racing from the sports pages to the front page? Another Italian 'superhero' who preceded Coppi and Bartali and, like them, would win the Tour de France twice - in 1924 and 1925 - was Ottavio Bottecchia. But in 1927, the Italian rider was found next to his bike at the side of the road close to his home in Udine with a fractured skull. He died, 12 days later, aged 32. It was initially thought that his injuries were caused

by a crash, but Bottecchia was also a socialist who was partial to a bit of antifascist literature, leading some to think that he may have been bumped off by supporters of fascist prime minister Benito Mussolini.

Arguably Italy's most tragic cycling figure of all — Marco Pantani — would also pass away far too young, the victim of a cocaine overdose in 2004. The 1998 Giro and Tour de France champion's spiral towards drug addiction and his subsequent death was tragic enough, but rumours still abound that, just like Bottecchia, he might have been murdered.

#### EXTRA HORSEPOWER

Today, while the battle still rages against the scourge of doping, a new form of cheating has been identified. Yet it's one nobody is certain even exists: that of 'motorised doping'.

When Switzerland's Fabian Cancellara attacked during the 2010 Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix, some jumped to the rather outthere conclusion that his rapid acceleration could only be down to some kind of hidden motor (replete with plenty of 'proof' in the form of annotated YouTube videos). It was a claim he and his

fellow professionals laughed off as pure folly. But when Canada's Ryder Hesjedal crashed during the 2014 Tour of Spain, the behaviour of his bike on the ground led those same conspiracy theorists to suggest that the continued spinning of the back wheel was also due to something more nefarious than inertia. Certainly the UCI has deemed it necessary to occasionally swoop at major races to examine randomly picked riders' machines for signs of added horsepower.

Were a motor ever to be found, it would surely rank as the biggest and boldest scandal of them all.





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Sophie Hurcom

t's 9am on a Tuesday morning and 22 teenagers are sat in front of tables in a classroom in Manchester. They've already had an hour-long lesson that morning, and have an afternoon of training and classes planned until 8pm. But rather than being at university or college, the students are all members of the British Cycling Academy, and are halfway through a two-week induction boot camp.

For 2016 the Academy has been revamped, with 63 riders of all disciplines — road, track, mountain and BMX — aged 15 to 21 joining. What was formerly the Olympic Development Programme is now the Junior Academy, while the Olympic Academy, for 18-21-year-olds, is now renamed the Senior Academy. Described as the "ultimate finishing school", it is the step below the Podium Programme made up of Britain's best, elite cyclists.

Rod Ellingworth established the Academy in 2004 to great success. It was characterised by its notoriously tough boot camp held in Manchester, and a training base in Tuscany, Italy where the riders lived, raced and trained from 2006 to 2010. The emphasis was to adjust to the lifestyle of a professional cyclist, as well as physical training, and riders such as Mark Cavendish, Geraint Thomas, Ian Stannard, Ben Swift and Peter Kennaugh all passed through its doors.

Methods that worked well in the past are being reintroduced for 2016, with the 2020 Tokyo Olympics in mind. Most notable is the return of an Italian training base (see panel) where the riders on the men's endurance programme will spend seven months next year, while those on other programmes will also take advantage of it for shorter periods.

The women's endurance squad is also moving back to Manchester, from Newport where it has been based since the Commonwealth Games, to be closer to all the facilities and coaches.

#### A university experience

For riders on the senior programme, the Academy is the equivalent of a university experience. It's a full-time schedule that requires them to move into shared accommodation near the National Cycling Centre in Manchester — often it's the first time moving away from

home, where they have to cook and clean for themselves, and take responsibility for their own health, time and wellbeing.

The idea of the two-week boot camp is to make riders think about all aspects of their life that can affect their performance. Classes range from bike maintenance to health and hygiene, social media use, basic Italian language lessons, financial management, nutrition and anti-doping.

"What we've looked at is all the deal breakers that they need to know at this stage," says Ian Yates, British Cycling's performance pathway manager. "We're trying to create [an environment where] it's as hard as it's going to be now, so they understand what is coming. It's [about] preparing them."

He continues: "It allows us to reinforce that commitment, that ownership, that responsibility that will run throughout their time on the cycling programme beyond the Academy that will take them right the way through [their careers]."

When the Academy began, the camp was held over six weeks, while in recent years the classes have instead been staggered throughout the year. This year the coaches are doing things differently.

The first class of the day for the riders is an hour of bike maintenance at 8am, run by BC mechanic Mark Ingham, who holds two sessions over the two weeks. It's the first time in at least four years a class like this has been held for new riders, and in fact it was Ingham who suggested it be brought back after a rider on the Podium programme came to him unable to change an inner tube.

Lesson one is on bike maintenance; how to change an inner tube, check tyres



for cuts and wear, check brake blocks, cables, gears, how to put on handlebar tape correctly, how to adjust a headset. It may sound rudimentary, but Ingham insists they start from square one. "If you show them too much they can try to do it themselves and make it [a problem] worse," he says.

# Core strength workouts aid on-bike stability

#### **Crash courses**

Next up on the timetable is health and hygiene, focused on how to prevent infections and illnesses — particularly vital for a large group such as this training or racing every day, and living together — conducted by a local nurse.

For teenagers who may have previously relied on parents to do things for them, the class can be enlightening. There's a mix of general tips such as why it's important to register with a local GP in case you get sick, how to keep your house clean, how regularly to change cleaning sponges, and how long you can keep meat for; as well as things particularly relevant to cyclists - to clean gym equipment after you use it, not to share towels and clothing, and why you shouldn't buy antibiotics unadvised abroad, in case they contain controlled substances. There's gasps and flinches when pictures are projected onto the screen of oozing sores and skin infections; horror stories of things that can happen if athletes' hygiene is lax.



"The classes are really helpful, especially to someone like me who is a first year and is quite new to it all really. The hygiene session that we had this morning was a massive eye-opener," says 19-year-old Annasley Park, on the women's endurance programme, who has just moved into a house with four of the other female riders and is now planning to organise a cleaning rota between the housemates.

One of the most valuable lessons for the riders is about anti-doping and the rules surrounding it, as it's something they are unlikely to have experienced before. The riders are taught about the dangers involved in doping, the nature of testing and the pitfalls of taking everyday medicine. "We can be subject to drugs testing at any time," says Park, "so it was just stressing the importance of making sure that everything is controlled, everything we think about is a controlled decision and that we do it well."

Nineteen-year-old track rider Matt Gibson, now in his second year at the Academy, agrees that the classes are insightful. "You get to learn a lot more about things off the bike where you wouldn't normally. Maybe you learn it but you don't really think about it, but it clarifies in your mind what the right things to be doing are.

# A day at Academy boot camp

**8am-9am:** bike maintenance **9am-11am:** health and hygiene **11-2pm:** break and riding session **2pm-5pm:** track (men's endurance) / gym session (women's endurance)

**6pm-7pm:** nutrition OR

**6pm-7pm:** bike cleaning masterclass **7pm-10pm:** track league racing

"The most important classes are the Italian lessons, they are key, nutrition ones are good — there's always new ideas coming up in nutrition that you haven't heard of. They're always the most interesting ones for me."

The Academy also encourages the riders to promote themselves and build their own brand, particularly using social media — things that can help them take their career forward after their racing days are over. During the year, riders complete work in the community and are encouraged to make public appearances, are given tips on how to conduct interviews and deal with the press, while coaching courses are also available.

"We had social media — that was with Martyn Ashton [former mountain bike

# **Rekindling the Italian magic**

It's been five years since British Cycling closed its training base in Italy, and considering the achievements the majority of riders who lived there have gone on to have, it's no surprise it's being reintroduced next year.

Described as a halfway house for riders en route to turning professional, the new base will be located in Montichiari, Northern Italy, and be home to the men's endurance programme for seven months. Track and road racing is combined; the indoor 250m Montichiari Velodrome is nearby and the European Track Championships are on the schedule, while during the summer the riders take on a full European U23 road racing programme.

The base, however, won't be exclusive to the men's endurance squad; riders from other programmes will spend time there, with mountain bike trails and BMX facilities also not far away. "We'll have local knowledge, local staff on the ground, local equipment and we've got a great relationship now with the local velodrome," BC performance pathway manager lan Yates explains.

Inspiration for the original Italian base came from a similar set-up in Australian Cycling, created by Brian Stephens, who joined BC this year as Olympic Programme Development coach. So why does Italy have so much to offer? "The benefits are the level of road racing and

the climate. It also forces the guys to be very independent. They grow up quickly living in a foreign environment, it prepares them for life later as professional cyclists."

Matt Gibson is one of the riders preparing to move to the new Italian base. Though it's on the track where he's shown the most promise — he won two golds at the U23 European Track Championships this summer, and gold as part of the team pursuit at the recent European Track Championships — he's looking forward to gaining more road racing experience.

"It's nice to know that the winter is going to be more track focused and the summer will be more about the road, it's easier to think about the year that way and plan goals," he says.

For Gibson, the biggest challenge is being away from home. "It's not the fact that I'm in Italy, it's not being with the people that I care about," he says.

Yet as Stephens explains, getting used to living abroad will stand riders in good stead for future life on a professional team. "It's definitely a big change for the kids living at home with their parents to sharing a house in Italy with the whole group, but when I worked with the Australian group it was exactly the same thing but we were moving further away from home as well! It's difficult but it's achievable, and it's successful."

world champion], an absolute inspiration to everyone I think," Park says. "He taught us how to promote ourselves in a positive way, and how to get more likes and shares on Facebook. How to network, so once we decide to either stop cycling and go into different areas within our sport we have the opportunity."

# **Encouraging progress**

When the Academy first began in 2004 with just six riders it was predominantly to find the next generation of track cyclists — success for British riders on the road was at that point rare. That year not one Brit rode the Tour. Most of the Academy's highest-profile graduates may now be known for their road careers — Cavendish, Thomas, Kennaugh and more recently Simon Yates — but all found success on the track first.

While the track sprint, BMX and mountain bike disciplines are all run as separate strands, the road and track endurance strands of the Academy are combined, with riders doing a bit of both.

However, finding the balance between track and road hasn't always been easy. There are some that have criticised BC's programme for placing too much emphasis on the track, while others have suggested that in light of Britain's recent success on the road with former track riders, more should be done to encourage young riders to race on the boards.

Chris Newton, an Olympic medallist on the track and now Academy coach

explains: "We'll take road-orientated riders but they must see the benefit of track — it's very short-sighted if they don't see that.

"I'm not saying you have to be the best on the track but it gives you another tool in your armoury. When we're on the track we've got a squad of 10 riders and maybe four of them are really roadorientated, they assist, they help out, we're all in it together; they're getting the benefits from the track. When we're on the road some of the track-orientated guys are helping the girls — there's that real team ethos"

Park, a road rider who won the Otley Grand Prix this year, is already discovering the benefits the track can offer. "Next year I'm hoping I'm going to have more of a sprint, more of a kick — track helps you with speed work, with reaction and all that. I want to learn that and bring it onto the road."

Ultimately, the aim of the Academy is to produce world-class, professional, British cyclists, whatever the discipline. As Yates explains: "I think that's what makes our Academy such a unique and probably unparalleled programme compared to anything else that's on offer for an 18-year-old.

"Yes they can ride their bike, yes they will have training and racing opportunities, but we can give them so much more; our job is to help them be successful in the future. If they're successful, we're successful."



# Senior Academy riders to watch



Matt Gibson, age 19 Won gold at the senior and U23 European Track Champs this year, and

garnered attention for his performances at the Tour Series in 2014, where he beat more seasoned professionals in round three.



**Annasley Park, age 19** Started racing in 2013 and

two months later won the
Junior National Circuit

Championships. Won the Otley Grand Prix this year after spending a day in a break with Dame Sarah Storey, before getting the better of her in the final sprint.



**Nathan Draper, 18** 

Junior national road race champion and winner of the five-day Junior Tour of Wales

this year, a race who's past winners include Dan Martin. Eighth in the tricky Junior Worlds Road Race in Richmond.



**Danni Khan, age 20**A double world champion as a junior in 2013 in the

sprint on the track, but has switched to the endurance programme at the Academy this year.



**Germain Burton, 20**Won the Bec Hill-Climb aged just 15, but has focused

more on the track the last few years. Part of a young team pursuit squad that won bronze in Cali, Colombia in the World Cup in January.

# Academy graduates in numbers

**9** Riders on WorldTour teams

35 World champions

12 Olympic gold medallists



Available at all good newsagents and online at www.cyclingweekly.co.uk/shop with FREE p&p.

# TECH

# Do you need mudguards?

A seasonal favourite question that always polarises opinions. Dress your bike for winter, or suck up the muck, asks \*James Bracey\*

s thoughts turn to winter riding it's inevitable that discussion with your fellow riders will focus on the more practical aspects of riding at this time of year. Questions such as how do I keep warm on the bike, do I fit puncture resistant tyres and the ultimate — 'do I need to fit mudguards?' will be asked.

It is a rare rider who prefers the look of mudguards over the uncluttered aesthetic of a summer race bike, and many also find their association with the less 'cool' aspects of cycling such as touring and Audax riding an immediate turn-off.

However, these superficial shortcomings are not hard to overlook when you consider what a difference mudguards can make to your winter riding. On wet roads, instead of enduring a constant muddy spray from your tyres, mudguards keep you — and the bike — largely dry. Even when riding through the rain, you'll only get half as wet because you're not being showered from below as well as above. What's more, your expensive clothing stays clean.

As the cycling population of Britain continues to increase, more and more people are discovering the benefits of riding with clubs and groups. Many clubs encourage riders to fit mudguards for winter club runs, and if you happen to be the only rider without them on a wet day you may find yourself ushered to the back where your naked tyres can do the least damage — or at least create the least discomfort.

Even the pros are getting in on the act, looking at the number of 'Ass-saver' style mudguards fitted during the bigger early season races such as Milan-San Remo to ensure a little 'comfort' during these brutal epics.

### A new direction in bike design

Back when 23mm tyres were king, few road frames were designed with sufficient clearances for guards. In many cases the only decent mudguards that would fit your frame were 'temporary' styles such as the ubiquitous Race Blade by SKS (a great design but not a lot of protection and fell off lots) or the Crud



Products Road Racer (more protection but fiddly to fit and prone to breaking)

However, with wider tyres now the norm, and disc brakes growing in popularity, so frame and fork clearances have evolved to meet this demand and utilise the freedom disc brakes give to frame design. The upshot of this means more room to fit mudguards, thus creating the ultimate 'one bike for all seasons'. Specialized, Trek and Cannondale to name a few all now offer models with this increased clearance and clever removable mudguard mounts.





# **Neil Webb**,

Founder, Bowman Cycles

People are finally seeing the sense in protecting themselves and their bikes

from the rain once the temperatures drop. As more people are coming into the sport it means more year-round cyclists, so it's a self-fulfilling prophecy when it comes to the need for mudguards. I tend to use full mudguards with extra long, ground-skimming flaps to keep my feet and the faces of those on my wheel as clean and dry as possible.





# Tom Baylis,

Rider, One Pro Cycling

Maybe it sounds like I'm moaning a bit, but I honestly have a pure hatred for

the things. Besides the fact they look terrible, they always break, and rub on the tyres; I'm not certain they even stop the deluge of spray smacking the rider's face behind you. Anyway, I've moved out to Girona now, so hopefully I won't need them anymore!



Bowman Cycles is another progressive brand that has worked hard to create a range of bikes that have effectively blended practicality with a clean and pretty aesthetic, as founder and designer Neil Webb explains: "By finding ways of either hiding bolt holes, integrating them into frame parts or having custom made, well designed and pretty, removable mounts — we use 3D printing — you can keep the look people seem to want, but also add mudguards when the mercury drops and the sky caves in with never ending precipitation."

# What mudguards will fit?

Now obviously not every bike will fit a full set of bolt-on mudguards but that doesn't mean you can't get some really good 'temporary' guard sets that offer great levels of protection such as SKS's Raceblade Long or Portland Design Works' Full Metal Fenders. If your frame has the clearances but no mudguard eyelets you can even buy adapters such as those produced by Axiom to allow you

to run 'proper' guards.

If you are lucky enough to own a bike with clearances and mudguards fittings then take your pick of the myriad of good looking guard sets available. Your friends will thank you.

# **OUR TAKE**

Unless you are a professional rider paid to suffer or a typical Belgian bred to be impervious to the rain and cold, using mudguards just makes sense. With so many styles now able to fit the majority of new bikes there are no excuses left for not using them. No one likes being wet and miserable when out, including your riding partners, so you'll avoid having to ride solo all winter due to not being invited on any group rides. The only question is not do you need mudguards, rather which ones to use?

# **HOT STUFF**

# Drift Stealth 2 Action Camera

The Stealth is small and light with a profile which should be unobtrusive on your bars



or helmet. It shoots in 1080p high definition with a claimed battery life of up to three hours, so we'll be videoing our Christmas rides to prove we're not slacking.

Contact: www.driftinnovation.com

Price: £149.99 Report: January

# Oneten merino long-sleeved base layer

Just in time for the cold weather is this merino long sleeve from Oneten. It's not dear for a merino top; we'll see if it measures up to the comfort and warmth of pricier options.

Contact: www.onetenapparel.com

Price: £29.99 Report: January

# Brooks Cambium C13 saddle

The Brooks saddle range is getting increasingly racy. This new saddle, to be released in January, has a plastic base and carbon-fibre rails. Its cover is made of cotton impregnated with natural rubber, so no dubbin required. Brooks quotes a weight of 265g, so it's comparatively light too.

Contact: www.brooksengland.com Price: £150.00





# Giro Factor HV ACC road shoes £249.99

The Factor HVs are aimed at riders with wide feet or high insteps. Other than only being available in matte black, they mirror the attributes of the standard Factors: the EC90 carbon sole felt stiff without being uncomfortable; the Evofibre upper provided good ventilation; the combination of two straps and a ratchet kept my feet firmly in place, and there are replaceable heel studs. To improve the fit the shoes come with Giro's SuperNatural Fit Kit, which offers three different instep pad options. The only gripes are that for those with







# Castelli Atelier 13 socks £15

Standing tall at 13cm and made from a merino wool blend, the Atelier is warm and breathable, with good wind and waterproofing qualities. With the range extending down to smaller sizes than most unisex options, the Atelier is a perfect fit for UK size five feet. Padding under the forefoot helps reduce metatarsal discomfort caused by pedal pressure during a long ride, while a compression band supports the arch of the foot. When on, the white of the Lycra does show through the bold block colours, reducing the impact somewhat, but other than that this it's a great sock. Hannah Bussey 36g pair www.castelli-cycling.com

# Hoy Vulpine Men's Roubaix bibtights £109

These tights use a thermal Roubaix fabric which keeps you warm and doesn't cause any irritation. The Cytech insert is good quality and made for many a comfortable mile. The tights provided a good fit thanks to the stretchy material, and the rubber gripper tape on the hem did a good job of keeping them in place. As well as the Hoy Vulpine logos on both thighs there is a reflective logo on the back of the right calf. However, when it rains you'll want more water resistance. Christopher Hovenden

273g www. vulpine.cc



# **LONG TERM TEST**

# 45 months later

# Castelli Nanoflex Knee Warmers £35

A good autumn option, these knee-warmers are still toasty, although the water now soaks in rather than beading off. Their elastic properties are intact too. My only complaint is the prominent seam at the back which tends to irritate after a few hours' riding. PN www.castelli-cycling.com

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# Bontrager RXL Windshell overshoes £35.99

It's nice when you invest in a piece of kit that is great at more than one thing — which is exactly the case with these Bontrager overshoes. They will not only protect you from the elements, but are tight-fitting enough to be used as aero shoe covers too. Made from Bontrager's Profila Wind fabric, they're completely windproof, and the water-resistant protection has kept my feet dry through showers and some pretty big puddles. The only snag is that because they're really aero, they can be tricky to get on and off, especially with the zip located on the inside of the leg. Henry Robertshaw

86g (per pair) www.bontrager.com





# Cadence Conqueror long sleeve jersey £125

A mild November has offered perfect conditions to enjoy this stylish new thermal jersey from Californian brand Cadence. It's made from Roubaix fabric with a nice fleecy interior that keeps you warm down into single figures.

Three rear pockets offer a good amount of storage space, although I did find that the tight race fit meant it was a little tricky to get stuff in and out. The upside of this fit is that there's minimal wind-flap and I found the arms in particular to be a perfect length. Yet £125 perhaps leans a tad towards the dear side for a jersey.

Henry Robertshaw 255g

www.vamperformance.com

# Can't live without

# Road ID wristband from £16.99

I have worn my Road ID wristband on every ride for the last three years. The metal badge is engraved with my vital details in case the worst should happen. The Velcro strap makes it easy to get on, it is comfortable and the reflective stitching improves visibility. CH www.roadid.com



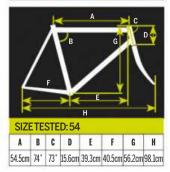
# Raleigh Criterium Sport £750

Tested by: Paul Norman | Miles ridden: 305 | Size tested: 54cm | Weight: 10.10kg/22.27lb

ne of the oldest bicycle companies in the world, Raleigh was founded in 1888 and by the early 20th century was one of the largest too. It's always been based in Nottingham and

Raleigh	Criterium	Sport
£750		

<b>ま/50</b>				
Frame	9/10			
Specification				
Ride	8/10			
Value	9/10			
Distributor	www.raleigh.co.uk			
Frame	Raleigh AL6061 double-butted alloy			
Fork	Endurance blend carbon blades with aluminium steerer			
Size range	49, 52, 54, 56, 58, 61 cm			
Weight	10.10kg/22.27lb (without pedals)			
Groupset	Shimano Tiagra 4700 10sp, SRAM PG1030 cassette			
Alterations	None			
Gear ratios	11-32t, 50/34t			
Wheels	Raleigh RSP AC2.0			
Tyres	Schwalbe Lugano 25mm			
Bar	Raleigh RSP alloy			
Stem	Raleigh RSP alloy			
Seatpost	Raleigh RSP alloy 27.2mm			
Saddle	Raleigh R1			



occupies a large site on the outskirts of the city, although manufacturing has been moved overseas.

The Raleigh heron logo still graces the head tube of its bikes and the range has grown to offer kids' bikes, commuter and leisure machines, hardtail mountain bikes, road, cyclocross and gravel ranges and now e-bikes too, as well as a relaunch of the famous 1970s Chopper.

Raleigh also has a racing pedigree sponsoring the TI-Raleigh team in the 1970s and 80s, with Joop Zoetemelk winning the Tour de France on a Raleigh bike in 1980. The company currently sponsors the Raleigh-GAC UK-based professional team, which rides the Militis Team bike.

Alongside the Militis, Raleigh also sells the Criterium endurance race range, which comprises five bikes with prices from £475 up to £1,500. At £750, the Criterium Sport is the higher spec aluminium-framed bike and boasts a complete Tiagra groupset 4700 — Shimano's latest 10-speed offering.

### **Frame**

Raleigh's Criterium Sport frame is made of double-butted AL6061 alloy with a tapered headset and conventional threaded bottom bracket shell.

Cables are routed internally through the top tube and the down tube, which keeps them clean and tidy.

Top and down tube profiles are diamond shaped for rigidity and the top tube and seat tube are gently tapered too. The fork has straight carbon-fibre blades and an alloy steerer. There are mudguard mounts front and rear and space to fit 28mm tyres.

# **Specification**

The Criterium Sport comes

equipped with Shimano's latest groupset, Tiagra 4700. Although still 10-speed, in use it feels a lot closer to the latest 11-speed Shimano groupsets than its predecessor. Shifts are smooth front and rear and the shifters have lost the gear indicator windows and now route the cables under the bar tape for a cleaner look.

The long-cage rear mech copes easily with the 11-32t SRAM cassette. Brakes are Tiagra too and the whole groupset is anodised in a subtle, eye-pleasing electric blue-grey.

Wheels are Raleigh's

A well put-together package for the price



in-house RSP AC2.0, which have quite a deep section for an aluminium rim at 30mm and are shod with Schwalbe Lugano 25mm tyres, which help cushion out some road imperfections without feeling sluggish or lacking grip.

### Ride

I found it easy to rack up the miles in confidence on the Criterium Sport. The bike carries a bit of extra weight over more expensive options, but the wide-range cassette enabled me to keep momentum over undulating roads without resorting to the small ring, while the top-end ratios were high enough to push on when on faster roads and descents.

I found the quite upright ride position helped with upper body comfort, although it did put more weight on the saddle, which I found slightly uncomfortable after three or four hours riding, but nothing unbearable.

Raleigh's AC2.0 wheelset would not look out of place on a bike at twice the price and feels reasonably lively, with no evidence of flex, while I



found that the Tiagra brakes provided effective stopping in the dry and the wet.

# Value

The Criterium Sport's quality frame follows modern trends in bike design: tapered headset for steering accuracy, wide down tube for rigidity, internal routing of cables to keep them out of the way of dirt and mud and room



for wider tyres and guards.

It's great to see a complete Shimano Tiagra groupset on a bike at this price, particularly since this latest iteration of Tiagra has upped its game to such an extent.

As fitted to the Criterium Sport it provides quality components, and Raleigh has made none of the cost-saving swap-outs that are all too often the norm.

# **Verdict**

For a bike retailing at £750 the Criterium Sport is impressive. It's a comfortable long-distance ride and rolls well on its 25mm tyres. The frame feels solid but not leaden and the relatively upright riding position takes pressure off the neck and shoulders, reducing upper body fatigue.

The new Tiagra groupset is definitely a huge step up from its predecessor. It shifts smoothly and precisely front and rear. Apart from the lack of an 11th gear ratio, there's not much to distinguish it from Shimano's next-up 105 groupset. The new chainset looks the part too, the four-arm design looking much more

businesslike than its predecessor.

Raleigh has definitely produced a bike which is spot-on in value and ride quality. For the aspiring rider looking to put a toe into recreational and sportive road cycling, without incurring too much expense, or as a winter

or as a winter bike, it's a great option.

# Fo

- Quality frame is easy to live with
- Tiagra groupset provides quality shifting
- Good wheels and tyres

# Against

■ Saddle is not the most comfortable

# Winter gloves

Henry Robertshaw reviews five pairs of gloves designed to withstand the worst of the colder months

# What?

Winter gloves are designed to offer you a high level of protection to keep you riding through the worst the British weather can throw at you. Most importantly they will offer warmth, so should be wellinsulated and completely windproof. You'd also expect more expensive pairs to be waterproof too, although this should not come at the expense of breathability.

# Why?

There's nothing worse than getting cold hands on a bike ride, so a good pair of winter gloves is a vital investment to make sure that you can keep feeling in your fingers this winter, helping you to not only maintain control of your brake and gear levers, but also make sure you can take some enjoyment from those long winter miles.

# How?

With autumn now fading, we've been making the most of the early cold weather to put these five gloves to the test. To make sure they were tested in the correct conditions, we've been heading out for crisp morning rides before work, and have not been put off by the rain in order to test their waterproof credentials.

# **HOW WE SCORE**

- 10 Superb, best in its class and we couldn't fault it
- 9 Excellent, a slight change and it would be perfect
- 8 Brilliant, we'd happily buy it
- 7 Solid, but there's better out there
- 6 Pretty good, but not quite hitting the mark
- 5 OK, nothing wrong with it, but nothing special
- 4 A few niggles let this down
- 3 Disappointing
- 2 Poor, approach with caution
- 1 Terrible, do not buy this product

# GripGrab Polaris £60°

The GripGrabs are polished performers with a well thought-out design. There's 4mm of insulation, which is warm but without so much bulk that you lose bar feel. A single gel pad over the base of the palm has been incorporated as well as a host of silicone grippers where your hands rest on the bars, and on the first two fingers.

The two middle fingers have articulated sections to help with finger curvature.

Weight 148 The padding is well grams attached to the outer, so it

stays put and I didn't find that it bunched or got sweaty. Annoyingly, the seam where the thumb meets the palm is exactly where your hand rests if riding on the hoods or the drops. It can be felt when you're riding, although you soon get used to it and it's not uncomfortable.

The cuff is long, so there's plenty of overlap with your jacket to keep out draughts, and it's secured with a non-catching Velcro tab. There are lots of reflective elements on the backs of the gloves too, so nighttime visibility is good.

# Dare2b HandleIt £35

Dare2b's Handlelt gloves come with two padded sections in their synthetic leather palms. The pads have a grippy silicone print and are positioned just where you need them to provide a comfortable grip on the bars. The backs of the gloves are made of a breathable waterproof fabric and there are large, soft wiping sections

on both thumbs. There are also non-catching Velcro wrist fasteners and a clip to keep the gloves together when you're not using them.

Weight 112 grams

In use they're comfortable and provide a nice level of insulation and good bar feel. The thumb seam is flat-locked and positioned so that it is not under your palm when resting on the bars. The cuff is quite short though, so you may find that you have a gap if your jacket's sleeves are short.

I found the lining was a bit loose in the shell. Once my hands got hot, this made the gloves a bit difficult to get on and off and I was also concerned that over time the lining might separate from the outer.

Sizes S-2X www.gripgrab.com Sizes S-XL www.todayscyclist.co.uk



# Altura Zero Waterproof £44.99

With an impressive amount of internal lining and a large cuff, which comes high up the wrist, the Zeros are clearly designed for rides on cold winter days. The neck of the gloves is narrow, but it doesn't inhibit getting them on,

and the Velcro strap keeps the cuff secure. The upper uses Altura's Shield technology, which keeps out the wind and most rain, while at the same

Weight 164 grams

time providing good ventilation. The palms initially felt thin but the strategically placed gel pads offered pretty good protection when the road was bumpy. The silicone strips covering the palm, and the tips of both the index and middle fingers, help with grip, and the reflective decals should help get you noticed.

Overall the Zeros are very comfortable, but they could be slightly more water resistant and more padding on the palm would be ideal for longer rides.

Sizes S-2XL www.zyro.co.uk

# Sealskinz Performance Thermal *£*55

The Sealskinz have plenty of padding on the palm to absorb vibrations — although the seams at the base of the index finger rubbed on longer rides — and Kevlar has been used to enhance their durability. Whether riding on the hoods

or the tops, grip was good thanks to the textured pattern on the fingers — which is also smartphone compatible. Soft material on the tops of

Weight 172 grams

both thumbs means you can wipe your face or glasses when needed. The gloves' opening is wide enough to slip your hand in and out easily whilst the medium length cuff is fastened with a narrow Velcro strap.

Sealskinz says the gloves are totally waterproof, breathable and windproof. On early morning rides the gloves kept out the cold wind and light rain. However, although they coped well with most weather, in persistent rain my hands did get damp and the ventilation could be better.

Sizes S-2XL www.sealskinz.com

# Chapeau Winter £39.99

Water resistance is decent, with excellent beading across the back of the hand. The nose wipes offered no water resistance though, with water immediately entering the glove in this area. If you are going to be out in sustained rain, I would suggest another solution, but these gloves will certainly see off a shower.

The Chapeaus are a little tight around the opening, with little stretch, but once you get your hand past the wrist area, they are a good fit, with cuffs that overlap well with a jersey or jacket.

Weight 107 grams

Both thumbs feature nose wipes and the padding on the palm is decent too. Insulation is good but they are not the most breathable pair,

and affairs became a little sweaty over 10°C

The fabrics used could feel nicer against the skin. I found the textiles felt a little rough and not as soft as other gloves.

Overall, the quality is good, the price is reasonable and there are some neat little reflective details, but there are better products out there.

7

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# FITNESS

# How do I... keep warm on cold rides?

Autumn may have been fairly cyclistfriendly, but winter proper is here now

Words: Simon Schofield

dvances in clothing technology have made coping with the cold much easier. With sufficient preparation you should only feel chilly in the most extreme conditions. Understanding what's going on in the body can help you overcome the physiological reaction to cold.

Hands and feet are the first to feel the cold due to a process called peripheral vasoconstriction. The body protects the vital organs at its core from cold by narrowing the capillaries in hands and feet to divert blood from the peripheries. Result: chilly fingers and toes. There are two ways to

counter this, the first of which is obvious but absolutely vital: wrap up warm, and don't allow your core temperature to fall. Donning all the kit and then standing around in the cold will hasten vasoconstriction.

Secondly, insulate hands and feet, the importance of which can't be overstated.

It is also important to avoid dampness accumulating on the skin, which can cool and further reduce body temperature.

Even in winter, a hard effort will produce sweat. It's arguably more important in cold weather to wear base layers with excellent wicking properties to ensure that moisture is transported away from the skin rapidly.

Breathing in cold air can cause a feeling of constriction while riding in winter, owing to what's called a bronchospasm. Muscles around the lungs' bronchial airways tighten in reaction to cold air, giving a 'tight' sensation similar to an asthma attack. A snood can help slightly warm the air before it's breathed in. Some may benefit from using an inhaler in winter, though this obviously requires

a discussion with your GP. Team Sky's nutritionist suggests using fish oils, shown to reduce bronchial constriction, as a supplement in winter.

Adequate fuelling is even more vital in winter, as the body has the added challenge of maintaining its core temperature, and its mobilisation of energy stores can be compromised. A good breakfast and a steady supply of food on the ride is essential.

# Essential points

- Prevent loss of core heat by wearing a thermal gilet
- Pay particular attention to keeping hands and feet well insulated
- Don't allow core temperature to fall by standing around in the cold
- Keep skin dry by wearing fast-wicking base layers
- Eat well to help the body regulate its heat through efficient metabolism
- If you're shivering, you are too cold; take immediate steps to warm up





Layers and good-quality kit beat any weather. If the roads get icy, head off road.

Gavin Barron

Mix it up with other sports and the turbo for conditioning — you never know, might even enjoy them.

Richard David



Decent winter kit, plenty of high-energy food before riding, and a decent cafe stop.

> Patrick Cartledge

Put the fire on, feet up... beer. *Mike York* 

Always take a spare layer and some latex gloves in case you have a mechanical.

Richard Gate

Look after your motivation. Too much turbo obliterates it. Turbos should be for intervals... nothing else.

Paul Oz

# Things to try this week

# OTE Energy drink

Replacing carbohydrate while on rides of over 90 minutes has been shown to improve performance. This energy drink is ideal for such a purpose. Available in a variety of flavours including orange, vanilla, lemonand-lime and blackcurrant, it comes in 43g sachets, as well as in larger bulk sizes. Each serving contains 40g carbohydrate, which is a suitable amount to replenish

stores when out on the bike.

www.otesports. co.uk £1.35 per sachet



# **Calf raises**

The calf muscle is perhaps one of the most underrated leg muscles using in cycling. Developing strong calves can help stabilise any unwanted movement in the pedal stroke as well as helping input additional power.

Start off with a strong base with your feet shoulder width apart.

- Slowly rise onto the balls of your feet reaching full extension over one second.
- Hold momentarily at the top of the rise before lowering down to the starting position once again over one second.
- Increase the difficulty of the exercise by completing the exercise on one leg or by placing the ball of your foot on a step to increase the range of motion of the raise.
- Complete three sets of 10 repetitions.

# Broccoli

The month of December not only heralds the full force of the cold weather, but it is also open season for bugs and germs. Consuming high antioxidant foods can help fight off ailments, and broccoli is a prime candidate. High in phytonutrients, which can also help prevent

cancer, broccoli contains a large amount of fibre and a variety of vitamins and minerals. Be sure to add it to your basket when doing your food shop over the Christmas season.





e've all been there: yesterday you rode an especially tough session, and today you're

barely able to walk, such is the severity of the aches. I remember one painful day after a strength training session: my entire body hurt so much I was doubtful I'd be able to get out of bed. Does this pain mean we've done too much, or is it just an unpleasant part of training that we have to learn to accept?

This type of muscle pain is called delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) and results from exercise which your muscles are not used to doing — usually harder or longer than you've done before. Dr Jon Bartlett is a scientist researching the impact of sleep and nutrition on exercise at the Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia.

"Often following a bout of highintensity endurance exercise or resistance training, there is a feeling of muscle soreness, which is understood to be due to micro tears in the musclefibres," he explains. "This is considered to be a central part of muscle adaptation, thus increasing protection following exercise bouts."

This soreness is described as 'delayed' because it typically gets worse 24 hours after the exercise that induced it, peaking anywhere between 24 and 72 hours afterwards. It takes up to seven

"Delayed onset

results from

not used to"

exercise which

muscle soreness

your muscles are

days to completely disappear. DOMS doesn't only hurt, it also stops muscle from functioning properly, affecting performance.

Experts have many theories on the cause of DOMS but currently there is no consensus. The strongest theory is that it is caused by a combination of

factors: micro-tears in muscle tissue inducing inflammation, combined with leftover waste products and damage to connective tissue.

### Can the pain be eased?

Athletes use all kinds of techniques to try to mitigate DOMS. The vast majority are ineffective. Research has found that stretching, electrical current therapy and acupuncture have no discernible impact on pain or performance. There is some evidence supporting the use of massage

(although the associated pain relief is only temporary), ice baths and taking antioxidant supplements.

It's obvious why you'd want to alleviate DOMS, but some research has suggested that if the duration of pain were shortened, the result may be incomplete recovery.

### Do we need DOMS?

Training makes you fitter because it stresses the body and results in adaptations. DOMS is a side-effect of this adaptation, making you feel sore as a way of making sure your body has time to repair itself.

In this context, inflammation is not necessarily your enemy. In the case of injury, acute inflammation is part of the healing process — evidence that your immune system is doing its job and healing damaged tissue; redness, swelling and heat are caused by immune cells moving in, while pain reduces the chance of your doing further damage. It's similar with DOMS, though of course the symptoms shouldn't be so severe.

If you were to cut this inflammatory process short, your body might be unable to finish the healing process, inhibiting adaptations. In other words, taking measures to reduce DOMS may work against you in terms of long-term fitness gains. Feeling able to ride hard again

sooner might limit the fitness rewards from all your hard work.

# Do antioxidant supplements aid recovery?

Although the research results have been mixed, some studies suggest that supplementing with antioxidants might reduce adaptation to

training. Exercise produces reactive oxygen species (ROS) molecules whose chemical nature 'attacks' other molecules and causes cell damage. These molecules are soaked up by antioxidants, either consumed or made by the body. Production of ROS is a normal part of metabolism; the faster metabolism during exercise releases more ROS.

Researchers initially thought this increase in ROS might lead to oxidative stress, i.e. if the production of ROS outstripped the body's ability to soak up

# **Training with DOMS**

DOMS reduces muscle function, meaning you won't be as powerful on the bike, especially when trying to produce high torque in a high-geared sprint or climb. This reduces your performance and might also increase risk of injury by resulting in an unusual pattern of muscle activation and unaccustomed strain on ligaments and tendons. Therefore, it might be worth taking it easy on days when you have DOMS, or ensure you train using high cadence to ensure your painful muscles aren't overloaded.

antioxidants. It was speculated this could lead to poor recovery from exercise and decreased performance, which led to the theory that taking an antioxidant supplement could improve recovery.

Antioxidant supplements may be beneficial if you exercise so much that you outstrip your body's ability to soak up ROS or if you have a diet low in naturally occurring antioxidants (see below). However, it turns out ROS sets in motion a cascade of biochemical events that lead to the adaptive response to training. If you soak up the ROS by artificially increasing the number of antioxidants in your body, you might not get as fit from training.

Antioxidant supplements commonly contain vitamins A and E or concentrated berry formulas, which give the body a super-boost of antioxidants. Though reducing DOMS may allow an athlete to return to hard training sooner, the recovery process may be compromised. Avoiding supplements and simply resting during DOMS may yield just as much fitness gain — despite involving less exercise overall.

### Are ice baths beneficial?

Research into whether ice baths help or hinder recovery has shown mixed results. Some research suggests ice bathing slightly reduces post-exercise soreness, but only minimally.

Research published in the journal *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* in 2014 looked into the effect of ice baths on endurance cyclists. National-level cyclists completed a 29-day block of training including long rides, high-intensity training and a maximum

### **Fitness**

of 28.5 hours of riding per week. Some of the cyclists bathed in 15°C water for 15 minutes four times per week, while others cooled down without a bath. The study found no negative impact of ice baths, based on participants' power output in fitness tests. Some tests showed a small benefit from ice baths. Unexpectedly, ice baths seemed to increase the time it took participants to get to sleep, which could impact recovery.

Research published in the Journal of Physiology in 2015 yielded strikingly different results. Participants partook strength training twice a week for 12 weeks and bathed in 10°C water for 10 minutes after each training session. while others cooled down on a bike. After 12 weeks, the non-ice bath users had greater increase in muscle size and strength compared to those who used the ice bath. To delve deeper into why this was happening, the researchers looked at what happens at a cellular level in muscle tissue after a person does a single-leg squat and then either uses an ice bath (or doesn't). In the ice bathers, the

biochemical pathways needed to build strong muscles were blunted.

There are some important differences that make comparing these studies difficult. The cyclists didn't use the ice bath after every training session, although this doesn't explain why there was still an improvement in ice bathers over non-ice bathers in the first study. This study also used warmer water, which may have affected the results.

One explanation is that cyclists don't need big muscles to improve performance. So long as other factors in fitness still improve, a cyclist's performance will improve. One of these factors is the concentration of mitochondria in muscle. When you train, your muscle responds by increasing the concentration of these cellular powerhouses in muscle tissue. Some research has suggested that bathing in ice improves the ability of muscle to build mitochondria, which then has a knock-on effect on performance.

What can we take from all this research? If you're looking to build muscle, it seems that using ice baths to recover isn't a good idea. It's wiser to

# Plenty of fruit and veg is a must for athletes

# **Easing DOMS: pros and cons**

Sound sleep and a nutritious diet rich in fruit and vegetables are the critical ingredients when it comes to recovering from hard exercise, but there are several other strategies that might be worth trying

Means of easing DOMS	For	Against	
Antioxidant supplements	Some evidence that these supplements reduce pain and allow athletes to return to hard training sooner. Easy to add to diet.	May interfere with the natural recovery process — returning to training sooner may not yield the best long-term results.	
Ice baths	May marginally reduce soreness. Some research suggests they improve muscles' ability to build mitochondria.	May limit the development of new muscle-fibres. May make it more difficult to fall asleep. Time-consuming to prepare.	
Massage	May reduce soreness for a short period. Done well they can be relaxing and enjoyable.	Benefits are likely only short-term; if longer-term gains are the aim, massage may be waste of money.	
Recovery ride	Seems to be effective in alleviating soreness, and means you don't stop riding.	Reduction in pain often only short-term; it may be more g. effective to rest completely	
Foam-rolling	Appears to reduce soreness after strength training. Commonly used by pro riders.	Insufficient evidence to support confidence in the effectiveness for endurance athletes.	

'tough out' the DOMS, content in the knowledge you're reaping the rewards of your training session. If you're taking part in a long-distance bike race, ice bathing might actually improve your fitness gains in some areas while reducing DOMS.

Bearing in mind the apparent benefits of ice baths are very small, they may be the result of chance.

### How best to recover?

Taking all of the above into account, what is the best way to recover? It seems that using recovery aids such as antioxidant supplements or ice baths might not for the best. However, ensuring your diet is high in antioxidant-containing whole foods is important to



# Expert view "Support for supplements is scant"



Dr Jon Bartlett, sports science research fellow at Victoria University, Australia,

says research into DOMS-preventing supplements has been mixed

"In one study from Norway, [scientists] investigated vitamin C and E supplementation during 10 weeks of resistance training. It appears these supplements reduce the acute adaptive response. However, this didn't interfere with increases in muscle mass.

"In another study, this time looking at vitamin C and E supplementation during 11 weeks of endurance training, reduced cellular adaptations were apparent in the antioxidant group — but this didn't result in reduced performance.

"In contrast to these studies, vitamin C and E supplementation during endurance training was shown to reduce adaptations relating to production of internal antioxidant sources by the body — but this didn't have any effect on markers of mitochondrial adaptation to exercise.

"These findings suggest that in cases where there are no antioxidant deficiencies, there is little need to supplement in order to improve training adaptations. In fact, no studies have shown any enhancement in training adaptations with antioxidant supplementation, which may in some cases in fact reduce training adaptations."

# "DOMS is a positive thing"



Physio Dr Graham Theobald, clinical director at The Body Rehab (thebodyrehab.co.uk),

believes DOMS is both inevitable and necessary

"From a clinical perspective, I see DOMS as a positive thing. It is somewhat inevitable for cyclists, particularly after hard, intense efforts on the turbo-trainer in winter. It is part of natural process of muscle development and so unfortunately has to be endured sometimes.

"If managed well, DOMS can be minimised. The two things that work well at reducing DOMS are a good warm-up and warm-down, and optionally a cold/ice bath. Stretching and massage doesn't seem to have much effect, and foam-roller work simply adds to the pain.

"Cyclists suffer from DOMS less than runners but we still have to grin and bear it."

# "Just get used to it!"



Team Sky's indefatigable Classics powerhouse Ian Stannard takes a no-nonsense attitude towards

post-training pain

"You've just got to suck it up. In fact, you've got to learn to enjoy it. The first gym sessions I do I can barely walk down the stairs, but I see that as a good sign. The next time you go, it hurts a bit less, then a bit less. There's not much you can do—just get used to it!"

ensure you recover naturally and fully. In fact, some health authorities suggest endurance athletes should consume 12 portions of fruit and vegetables a day rather than the recommended five portions for normally active people. Foods containing antioxidants include dark chocolate, grapes, berries, many other fruits and vegetables, as well as nuts and seeds.

Zinc, selenium and manganese are minerals needed to allow antioxidant enzymes to function. Top up dietary levels of these to maximise your recovery from exercise. Brazil nuts will give you a boost of selenium, while seafood and beef contain zinc, and sesame seeds and dark chocolate contain manganese.

Foam-rolling is another technique

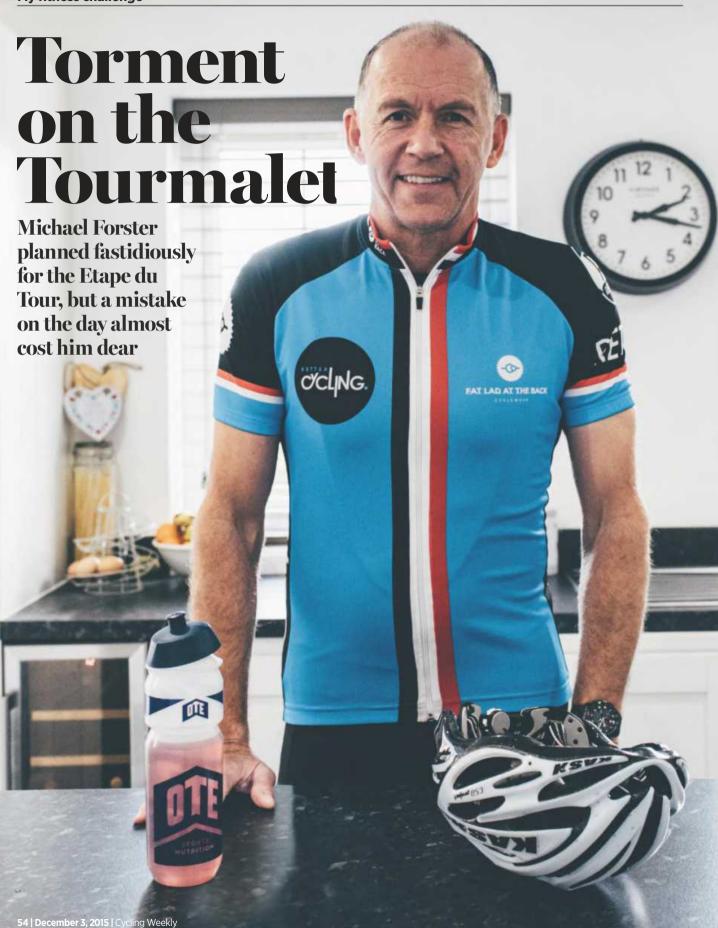
that may improve recovery from DOMS. Research published in the *Journal of Athletic Training* in 2015 found that foam-rolling immediately after, and then 24-48 hours after strength training, significantly improved feelings of fatigue and ability to perform. There isn't any research into foam-rolling for endurance athletes or whether this reduction in DOMS negatively affects long-term muscle-building.

Research has shown that a sauna session may decrease the severity of DOMS and its debilitating effect on performance. The research was carried out on weightlifters and showed significant improvements, so it might be worth trying before a strength session.

Having a massage might reduce

muscle soreness temporarily, but research has shown that pain is only reduced for the first 20 minutes after exercise and beneficial effects are gone after an hour. If you have a stage race or multi-day ride to do, a massage might be worthwhile just before you start. Going for a recovery ride has effects similar to massage, i.e. short-term.

A reliable way to ensure you don't suffer unnecessarily from DOMS is simply making sure your training regime builds at a reasonable pace. Don't go for a 12-mile run on your first cross-training session or squat your body weight on your first day in the gym. Build volume and intensity slowly, recover slowly and you'll see the biggest long-term benefits to your performance.



### Simon Schofield

ichael Forster thought he'd done everything right. He had a coach. He'd trained hard. He'd planned meticulously, even marking every refuelling point on his route profile. He'd drunk plenty. So why was he helicoptered off the Tourmalet during the Etape du Tour in a state of almost complete physical collapse?

Three kilometres from the top of the fabled climb, Forster got off his bike. He knew something was wrong, but he wasn't sure what: "I took my own pulse. It was very, very low, around 32bpm."

It was hot, in the mid-30s Celsius, and at first Forster put his symptoms down to dehydration. But as an ambulance was summoned, it was clear that something potentially very serious was wrong. "The dehydration theory just didn't stack up. I had drunk six litres of fluids," he says.

Forster, who used to work as a cardiac physiologist and counts himself as having a relatively good knowledge of sport science, lay down at the side of the road: "I thought [lying down] might be necessary to keep my blood pressure up and maintain consciousness."

It was a good call; the ambulance arrived and the medics quickly put a blood pressure cuff on the stricken rider. The reading was alarming — just 48/28 (normal blood pressure is around 120/80). The ambulance whipped Forster — now being sick — to the summit, where more tests were performed on his heart.

### **Mystery** malady

"I suppose I just thought I was fatigued," Forster continues. "But in hindsight, that can't have been right. I'd done the training. I was used to long rides. After 150km of riding, I was grinding my way to the top but I wasn't overexerting myself."

The medics put him on a drip and did more tests; their concern was palpable. "They kept seeing things they didn't like. I know my own 12-lead ECG [readings] and was not concerned with what I saw, but they weren't happy."

A helicopter arrived and flew Forster directly to hospital in the Pyrenean town of Tarbes, where he underwent more tests. With medics still scratching their heads, the stricken rider was transferred to a bigger hospital at Pau, and given four litres of saline on IV drips and subjected to chest X-rays, kidney function tests, another ECG, and blood tests. He was discharged, almost fully recovered, 36 hours later.

Still in his cycling kit, with his Garmin and bike missing, Forster tried to work out what had happened. Using his medical knowledge, he concluded: "With the effort, and in the heat, I think I suffered from electrolyte imbalances that led to the kidney dysfunction, arrhythmias and vasovagal episodes."

A vasovagal episode is an involuntary reaction of the nervous system that often results in an abnormally low heart rate and feeling faint. In short, Forster had done absolutely everything right — with one exception. He had taken on board too much fluid.

"I'm really annoyed I didn't predict it," he says. "I knew I sweated profusely during exercise. I knew it was hot on the day. But I just overlooked the potential danger [of drinking too much water]."

Forster's annoyance was compounded by the immediate aftermath of his hospitalisation. "I got a taxi back to my hotel only to find I'd been checked out of my room and my suitcase put into storage. There were no rooms available in Pau, so I caught a train to Biarritz, leaving my very expensive bike helmet on the train... having already lost my very expensive

# What they say

Performance dietitian Danielle Davies is convinced that Forster developed a condition known as exercise-associated hyponatremia (EAH), characterised by low levels of sodium (salt) in the blood — usually caused by drinking too much water. The body's salt balance falls dangerously out of kilter.

"The sodium in the body is diluted by excessive intake of water, possibly compounded by losses of sodium in sweat," she says. "Low sodium levels in the body result in too much water entering the cells, causing them to swell. This can have a number of consequences including a drop in blood pressure and heart rate irregularities such as bradychardia as experienced by Michael.

"His vomiting in the ambulance may have been a consequence of increased intracerebral pressure caused by swelling of the cells in the brain, once again a consequence of too much water entering the cells of the brain.

"Michael may well have hydrated adequately, but in the absence of any oral sodium, his body was unable to regulate fluid balance and he developed a potentially fatal condition."

Garmin computer in the helicopter."

Two months later, Forster got his bike back — and resolved to conquer his nemesis, the Col du Tourmalet. His chance came when the Etape du Tour returned to the peak in 2013. "Driving down it was 38 degrees Celsius and I thought, 'Oh no, not again.' But on the day it rained and at the top of the Tourmalet it was raining and only two degrees Celsius."

Forster again suffered on the climb — this time with the cold. But, he made it. He had packed electrolytes, which he now takes on every long ride. "I keep them in a tri-bag on the top tube so that there is a visual reminder that they are there and I won't forget to use them." More importantly, he didn't over-drink and instead judiciously obeyed his thirst.

"I think the lesson I learned was that it is simply impossible to over-plan. You have to have every single base covered. I hadn't made the connection between my profuse sweating and what that might do to my body. I have now."

# **Beware of over-drinking**

When the temperature is high and you're sweating heavily, it can be tempting to drink endlessly, even beyond thirst. But, as Forster found out, the consequences can be severe. He's learned his lesson. Drinking according to thirst is the safest protocol.

Although the biggest risk is from drinking too much water, it may be worth taking a sweat test. Sweat rate and sweat composition varies between individuals. There is evidence

that so-called 'high-sodium sweaters' need to replace electrolytes. A sweat test establishes where you sit in a scale: 10mmol of sodium per litre of sweat is low; 100mmol is very high; while 40-45mmol is average.

It's worth bearing in mind that people who train a lot tend to sweat more, and if that sweat has a high sodium content, it's a double whammy. For these people, electrolyte replacement may make an important difference.

# Growing old inefficiently

# Train to counteract age-related reductions in pedalling economy

**Andrew Hamilton** 

Do muscles become less or more efficient as you age? You might think that, over years of riding, muscles would become better at converting the energy required to spin the cranks. However, a new study looking at the performance of triathletes suggests that the reverse is actually the case.

### The science

Twenty young (average age 28) and 20 older (average age 60) triathletes performed sub-maximal running and cycling tests during which their cycling economy — how efficiently the muscles use oxygen to produce the energy required to propel the bike — was assessed. Better economy means less energy expended and less fatigue for any given speed. The researchers then compared the results to see if age affected the results.

### The results

As might be expected, the young triathletes had higher

overall levels of aerobic power than the masters triathletes (aerobic power tends to decline with age). However, at lower levels of exertion, the older triathletes' cycling economy was around 11 per cent lower than the younger triathletes, indicating their muscles were also working less efficiently. A similar result (10.8 per cent lower) was obtained in the running economy tests.

Eur J Appl Physiol. 2015 Sep 21. [Epub ahead of print]

### What it means

These results provide strong evidence that, in endurance athletes, efficiency declines with age. This is useful to know because it's possible to improve cycling economy with the correct training protocols. In practice, this means adding sessions such as a week of lower-body strength work (e.g. squats and lunges). When adding heavy weights sessions, however, overall riding volume should be reduced to compensate.





# INGREDIENTS (4 portions) ■ 100g pancetta ■ 450g lean beef mince ■ 2 tbsp olive oil ■ 225g onion, diced finely ■ 175g carrot, diced finely

- 1/5g carrot, diced finely
   2 garlic cloves, chopped
   1 glass of red wine
   300ml chicken stock
- or water ■ 450g chopped tomato
- Bay leaf
   2 tbsp Worcestershire
  sauce
- 3 tbsp tomato ketchup
   1kg floury potatoes
  - 100ml whole milk ■ 80g butter
- 25g grated Parmesan
  - Salt and pepper For the vegetables:
- 100ml pure maple syrup ■ 2 tbsp Dijon mustard
  - 2 tbsp Tabasco sauce
  - 4 tbsp Worcestershire

# METHOD

- 1) Fry pancetta until crispy and transfer to saucepan.
- 2) Brown mince beef and add to saucepan.
- 3) Add olive oil to pancetta fat and fry onion, carrot and garlic until soft but not brown. Add to saucepan.
- 4) Deglaze frying pan with red wine. Transfer to saucepan. Cover with stock or water.
- 5) Add tomatoes, the bay leaf, Worcestershire sauce and tomato ketchup. Bring to the boil and cook on low heat for an hour. Keep adding liquid if it gets too dry. 6) For the mashed potatoes,
- peel potatoes and cut into equal pieces. Boil until soft. 7) Drain into a colander
- and add back to pan to evaporate all moisture.
- 8) Mash potatoes dry, then add milk and beat in butter. Season to taste.
- 9) For the vegetables, choose vegetables in season, prepare and blanch individually until cooked. Reheat and add maple glaze to serve with cottage pie. 10) To finish, preheat oven to 220°C (Gas Mark 7). Place mixture into dish and top with potatoes. Brown for about 20 minutes. 11) Finish with grated cheese to brown under the grill. Serve cottage pie with caramelised vegetables.

Time taken: 100min

# TAKE HOME TRAINING SESSION

# Low-cadence strength builder

Winter isn't all about base miles. You also need to build up your pedalling strength, as well as focusing on cadence, for maximum efficiency

Begin with a gentle 10min warm-up at a comfortable cadence and effort. The main part of the session consists of an hour's worth of riding made up of three 20min sets. Each of these sets should consist of 15min steady riding followed by five minutes riding at a low cadence but at a higher resistance. Both of these efforts should be completed at a Zone 2-3 effort.

Time

0-10

10-25

25-30

30-45

45-50

50-65

65-70

70-80

(minutes)

When riding at the five-minute lower cadence intervals, aim to pedal at 65-70rpm by turning a gear two sprockets

taken: 80min					
\	_	_	/		
der t	han	us	ual		
	80	80n			

Time

harder than usual (for that cadence). As your pedalling strength improves, increase the amount of low-cadence intervals while also

Zone

80

90

90

90

80

65-70

65-70

65-70

increasing
the length
of time you
pedal at
the lower
cadence
effort.
Finish the
session
with a
10min
cool-down
at normal
cadence.

sprockets		cadence.			ence.
Effort	You can	It feels like you're	Use it for	% Max heart rate	% FT power
Easy Zone 1	Chat freely	Warming up	Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery	60-65%	56-75%
Steady Zone 2	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along in the bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%
Brisk Zone 3	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10 to 20min	75-82%	91-105%
Hard Zone 4	Say only one word at a time	Really attacking (perhaps on a climb)	Efforts lasting 2-8min	82-89%	106-120%
Very hard Zone 5	Grunt and gasp	Sprinting	Efforts lasting less	89%-MHR	121%+

Cadence

(RPM)

1

2-3

3

2-3

3

2-3

3



t's ridden in spring, the loop resembles an onion — although if we were being pernickety about it we'd suggest it looks more like a shallot — hence, the Spring Onion. We appreciate the endearing little legume reference, and couldn't wait to discover what the ride was all about.

At a relatively tame 65 miles, the Onion will never make you weep, but with a few choice ascents included it could induce a tear or two. Starting in Cobham, just inside the M25,

After a cursory traversal of Cobham and its surrounding urban areas, the route soon delivers you into the heart of the Surrey Hills before a brief meander through West Sussex, and then back up through the leafy lanes towards Guildford and beyond.

Although the course comprises the highest peak in the South-East (Leith Hill), along with a few other keen ascents, it isn't the most taxing on the calendar, and will prep the thighs nicely for a great year on the bike. Christmas cobwebs will receive treatment from the business end of a particularly feisty feather duster.

The Onion is now an integral ingredient of the sportive calendar after having enjoyed years of success as a season opener. The past few seasons have all sold out quickly, with the event accepting a maximum of 750 participants, so book early to secure a spot.



# How to enter

Enter online for a fee of £27.50 www.5034eventsuk sportive.co.uk

# **HQ** details

Cobham Village Hall is easily accessed via the A3, which you can pick up from junction 10 of the M25. Take the A245 (south) into Cobham village for the Village Hall. Parking is available on site.

# Where to stay

Cobham is host to a number of hotels including a Premier Inn on the Portsmouth Road, or there is a Hilton on Seven Hills Road. For a spot of luxury check out Woodlands Park Hotel or try the Half Moon Inn at Ripley.

# Where to eat

For pre-ride carb loading, try Carluccio's on Cobham high street for quality pasta and pizza, while the Plough Inn a mile up the road in Downside is a place for a pint and a hearty plate of pub grub. You could also try La Rive for a touch of the Med.

### Local bike shop

A mechanic at the start of the route should ease anxieties, but to pick up spares or for last-minute tinkering, visit Village Cycles, Cobham: 01932 865911, or www. villagecycles.co.uk.



the route quickly leads down into the Surrey Hills where the first real challenge of the day, Ranmore Common's Critten Lane, rears up to meet you. Although averaging just three per cent, the ascent continues for two miles, making for an early exercise in resilience. Admittedly this layer of the Onion isn't the fieriest, but with gradients occasionally touching double figures it should make your thighs sizzle somewhat. Indeed, with a further 1,000 or so metres of climbing to come, we were pleased at having the opportunity to open the lactate valve.

With little let-up during the first part of the ride, upon descending Ranmore the road is presently darkened under the shadow of Surrey's highest ascent, Leith Hill. There are myriad — eight all together — veins, which lead to its summit. The Onion takes you up the branch that approaches from Abinger and in turn joins Leith Hill Road where the toiling starts in earnest. Again, expect a sustained slog, although we found that over the 2.4 miles of climbing a fairly sprightly rhythm could be maintained, with the gradient, again, averaging out at a socially acceptable three per cent.

The Onion is now cooking on full gas, but over the hill and not so far away just past the sleepy village of Rudgwick, respite awaits in

the form of West Sussex's gently undulating terrain. Rounding the roots of the Onion on Horsebridge Hill near Wisborough Green you'll begin the journey back towards the Surrey Hills via the villages of

Kirdsford and Plaistow. This is where low average speeds can be amended; hit the drops and settle in for a protracted blitz in the big ring.

Back into Surrey and a fresh sortie into the Hills commences, starting with a pair of relatively keen ramps out of Dunsfold — one of the many picture-perfect settlements bisected on the route. In hindsight, these climbs could very well be considered as both physical and mental preparation for what lurks over yonder. Although by this time you may feel that you have peeled, sliced, caramelised and added this sportive to a plate of sausage and mash, it is still a long way from being fully digested.

Just after passing through Albury and Chilworth, the road meets the A25 for a few hundred metres before a left turn distributes you at the base of Combe Bottom. With a good 55 miles in your legs at this stage, Combe Bottom's gradient increases incrementally, intensifying until you meet a hairpin bend which signifies the beginning of a Mur-esque final 100 metres.

The Onion has now placed you in a veritable pickle. Combe Bottom is a climb with more potency than a jar of Haywards — and it won't be without a square-jawed resolve and not a little heavy breathing that you'll eventually meet the

top and allow yourself a theatrical bidon swig. The remainder of the ride, however, is relatively sedate and the final 10 miles of the route rolls back over the M25 and into Cobham.

ORGANISER'S TARGET TIMES					
Award	Distance	Ave Speed (Men)	Time	Avg Speed (Women)	Time
Gold	65	>17.3mph	3:45:00	>16.25mph	4:00:00
Silver	65	>14.4mph	4:30:00	>12.8mph	4:45:00
Bronze	65	<14.4mph	<12.8mph	<12.8mph	4:45:01

# The challenges

**1**Critten Lane The first climb of the day is an affable little ice-breaker. Although Critten Lane is a mere three per cent, it goes on for two miles and will prepare the thighs for harder things to come.

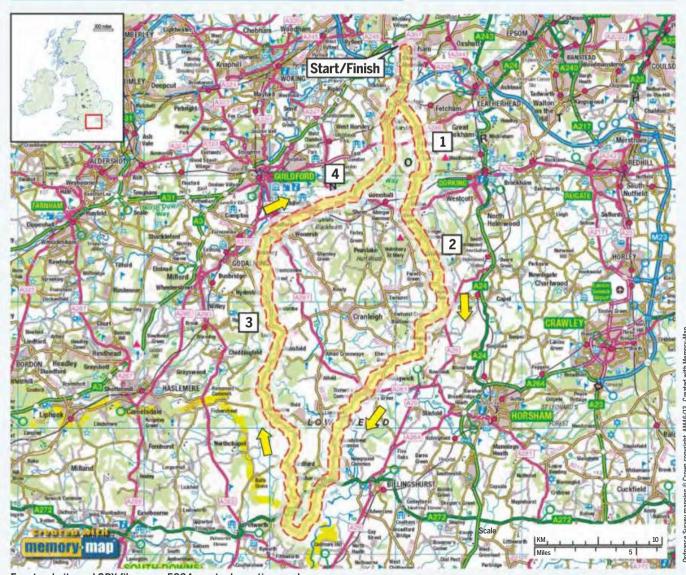
Leith Hill Road It's a long, steady climb at an average gradient of three per cent which ramps up into double figures on more than one occasion. This might be an opportunity for an early-season Strava KOM effort.

Loxhill A double-whammy of hurt awaits on the road from Dunsfold to Hascombe. Neither hill involves a huge amount of discomfort, but remember Combe Bottom is waiting patiently for you a few miles up the road.

# **NAIL IT**

4 Combe Bottom
The Spring Onion saves the best for last. Initially luring you into a false sense of security with its gentle gradient, Combe Bottom eventually mutates into a snarling beast of a climb. It is probably best tackled with a steady seated effort, preserving energy levels as best you can before the hairpin. which signifies the start of the proper toiling. An outof-the-saddle push around the bend and up the final straight which features gradients reaching up to 20 per cent, should render you a huffing and puffing wreck of a person — but a happy one. This is the last test of the day.





Event website and GPX file: www.5034eventsuksportive.co.uk

# Christchurch Bicycle Club

# A relaxed attitude and an irreverent sense of humour make Christchurch BC a fun club to ride out with

he sound of 20 pairs of wheels turning in unison is melodic, therapeutic even. Appropriate gears are searched for and selected with a muffled clunk, rims sporadically hiss against brake blocks, surface water is displaced by rubber with a gratifying fizz — and the deep hum of spokes sluicing through the air acts as a resonating bassline to the whole mechanical harmony.

At the helm, conducting this midweek ride, long-time Christchurch BC member Maggie Kirk sets a steady pace out from the village of Burley in the New Forest.

"I started cycling with the club to improve my triathlons," she tells me. "Cycling was my weakest discipline." But now, standing out of the saddle in order to tackle the first ascent of the outing, clad in CBC's trademark sky-blue fatigues, it becomes apparent that two wheels have since become her strength.

Behind myself and Maggie, merriment and mirth abound. Although the group chug on at a respectable pace, banter and badinage flow as effortlessly as the River Avon, a stoic companion for much of the day's ride.

Bill Simmons, who clearly revels in the club's social element but still finds a spare evening every now and then for a time trial or two, explains the intricacies involved in riding in the New Forest — the National Park having been, and still being to a degree, a hotly contested

area between cyclists and horse riders.

"Look, I'll show you," he says, as we approach a group of stationary horses with their riders holding sternly onto the reins. "We aren't with Wiggle, you know!" he hollers with a cheeky grin. This casts a blanket over the situation's gravity, and we are subsequently met with smiles, and a "thank God for that" from one of the jockeys.

# **Blue brigade**

Most of the route, however, is totally nag-free — indeed it is evident that the New Forest has more than enough room for manoeuvre for both sets of steed. As well as his impressive diplomatic credentials and a love of all things bike, from organising

# Club facts

Based: Christchurch, Dorset Members: 170 Formed: 1876 Meets: Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays in Burley and Christchurch

national time trials to participating in endurance yomps, Bill is also something of an aficionado when it comes to the local fauna, pointing out the wildlife and regaling us with stories of near-misses with deer.

Furthermore he is also au fait with regional flora, and as he casually enquires as to whether or not I want a kiss, he's quick to quash my alarm by pointing out a blossoming mistletoe plantation.

As well as gentle midweek ambles — which is the wont for a club whose average rider age is endearingly high — CBC also accommodate those who like their riding a little more lively, with Thursday and Saturday runs that take the pace up a notch or two. Given the gentle terrain of the New Forest, it's not hard to envision a streak of sky blue bisecting this vast bucolic tapestry at full tilt.

# History

The fact that CBC's first club runs were ridden on pennyfarthings may give you an insight into how deep its history runs. Spearheaded by Ernest Clarke way back in 1876, CBC's maiden outing comprised five riders and a jaunt from Christchurch to Sopley. Having lost momentum, the club was reformed in 2004 by John Vuagniaux who kept the club logo and maintained the same ethos — a club for all to enjoy. The club are also active on the pedal car scene and are affiliates of Cycling Time Trials, meaning they aren't averse to a bit of healthy competition. Saturday club runs

have become the most popular outings over recent years, and with the help of CTC's Terry Walsh, who actively encourages new riders to participate, numbers on the weekend ride can reach triple figures. Tuesday's ambles are generally organised by dedicated club member Jan Milton, who recces new routes and also arranges weekend rides as far afield as Banbury.

# Achievements

■ With the lion's share of members in the pursuit of leisure, many have impressive endurance rides on their palmarès — with

long-distance tours in the UK and Europe an annual occurrence. CBC regular David Turner is among many who attend club runs in order to retain fitness for lengthy tours — his most recent being a traverse of the Hebrides.

- The club have designed a number of events to keep them awheel during the summer months, including 'the six ferries' which see them board no fewer, of course, than six ferries throughout the duration of 100 miles in the saddle.
- Honorary member Darren Kenny has an impressive CV, which boasts Paralympic gold medals in both Athens and Beijing



and a silver in London, all of which were won on the track. He's also an OBE and was named the BBC South Sports Personality of the Year in 2005.



# Christchurch BC club run

# **Favourite cafe**

# Ride highlights

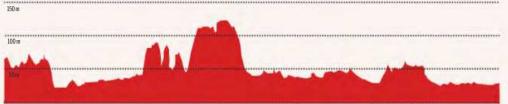
Castle Hill The toughest ascent of the day is a lengthy drag culminating in gradients which elicit a fair amount of rasping. It's well worth taking a moment or two at the top to admire the views.

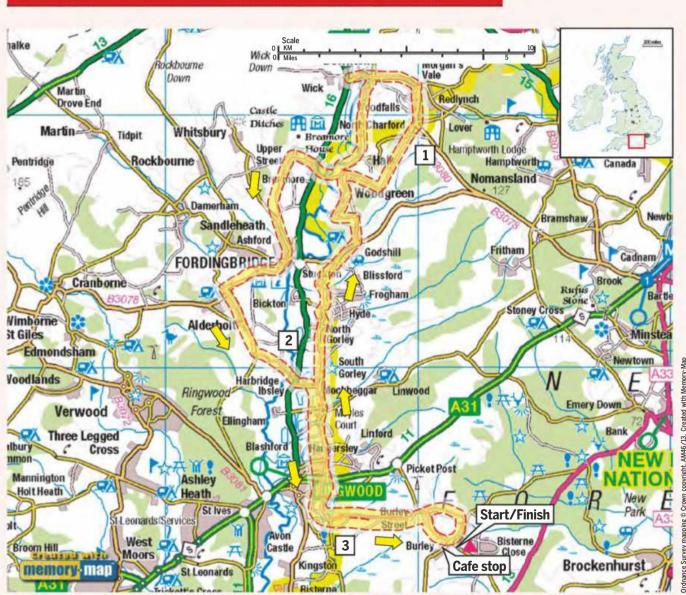
**Blashford Lakes Nature** Reserve approach

This is rural riding at its best twisty ribbons of flat tarmac under big skies. A chance to open up the big ring and really push on.

Moortown Lane Quintessential New Forest this is where a lower gear should be engaged and the surroundings soaked in. Wild ponies, buzzards and even acorn-guzzling pigs can be found along this section.

Situated in the Burley, a small village in the heart of the New Forest, the Old Farmhouse Tea Rooms (Ringwood Road, Burley, Ringwood, BH24 4AB, 01425 402218, www. oldfarmhouseinburlev.co.uk) is the epicentre of some serious tea and coffee drinking, and a fair old measure of cake chomping too. CBC's cafe of choice has been serving them well for many a year and it isn't uncommon for up to 100 riders to gather in the venue on ride days.





# Tea for two, or three, or four



Perhaps to bolster this notion, falling back a little further in the group I find myself riding alongside Paralympic gold medallist and OBE Darren Kenny. Kenny, on-trend with the entire CBC collective, is as genial as they come, and tells



me that he's a regular on both weekday and weekend rides, and how "it's nice to ride just for the sake of it rather than sprinting up every hill".

Scaling Castle Hill, the route's most demanding appointment, the camaraderie of this club is confirmed —

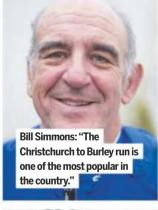
the eclectic mix of riders are unified in their quest to reach the top and banter turns to calls of encouragement.

Upon summiting, the pint-sized peloton admire the hard-won view of the Avon, meandering back from whence they rode.

# Meet the club









# **Cycling Books**

Treat yourself and get the latest DVD's and books from the Cycling Weekly Shop.

# Coast to Coast Cycle Routes by Mark Porter £11.99



Coast to Coast Cycle Routes is THE practical guide to crossing Britain. From West to East and East to West three different ways, following Britain's three most popular coast to coasters: the C2C, Hadrian's Cycleway and the Reivers. Paperback

# Le Tour de France 2015 The Official Review £20.00



From the Grand Depart to the cobbles of Nothern France and the majestic Alps and Pyrenees, 2015 provided non-stop excitement and spectacle. This official review captures in detail the gripping battles, and drama, through stunning photography and detailed reports. Hardback

# Feed Zone Portables by Biju Thomas & Allen Lim

£17.95



A Cookbook of On-The-Go Food for Athletes New cookbook Feed ZonePortables, Chef Biju and Dr. Lim offer 75 all-new portable food recipes for cyclists, runners,triathletes, mountainbikers, climbers, hikers, and backpackers.

# Goggles & Dust The Horton Collection

£11.99



# This Island Race



Rouleur set out to explore - to celebrate cycle racing in this country and to toast the people who make it happen - from the smallest of time trials to the invasion of the Grand Tours, Rouleur have captured a unique picture of a year in bike racing.

# **Keep Calm and Pedal On**

£9.99



In the never ending streams of traffic and the choking fumesof pollution this book gives the average cycle enthusiast or, indeed novice, a collection of quotes, sayings and proverbs on even more reasons why one should get on their bike. In the format of the bestselling Keep Calm and Carry On, Keep Calm and Pedal On is the perfect gift for keen bikers.

# **Legends of the Tour**Foreword by Phil Ligget £20.00

Hardback



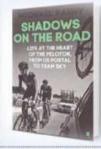
A dynamic and insightful portrait of the world's most famous cycling race, Tour de France. A selection of international cycling writers share their views on the courses, rivalries, its crop of great riders from the young climber to legendary riders. Hardback

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# Shadows on the Road by Michael Barry £17.99



Michael Barry explores what it was like to to ride as a teammate alongside such giants of the sport as Lance Armstrong, Mark Cavendish, Bradley Wiggins and Chris Froome.

# The Pain Free Cyclist Foreword by Bradley Wiggins £16.99



It's not (just) about the bike. Ride your bike long enough and you're likely to get injured! This book takes you through the most common cycling injuries, what they are, why you get them and what you can do to do get rid of them and get you back riding pain free. Paperback

# Personal Best by Beryl Burton £19.95



The autobiography of Beryl Burton, Personal Best is a remarkable story of determination in the face of illness, courage in her long but lonely pre-eminence and above all, of never, ever giving less than her best.

# 101 Damnations by Ned Boulting £14.99



Dispatches from the 101st Tour de France, 101 Damnations is a chance to relive the 2014 race, stage for stage, fall after fall, tantrum by tantrum; just the good bits mind, without all the aerial shots of castles. Or sunflowers.



# **Turf Moor**

# Low Row, Swaledale, North Yorkshire

Simon Warren

try and make a point of not documenting climbs that don't rise directly from base to summit. If a climb loses altitude before rising again, does that not make it two climbs?

Well, in the case of Turf Moor I've made an exception as it's CW such a fantastic **Difficulty** road. The start is immediate and rating: savage, climbing 6/10 as steeply as your heart rate is rising. Once your momentum from the preceding flat road vanishes you'll find the climb isn't as hard as it looks, which is in part due to the amazingly

smooth road surface. Out of the trees and across the cattle grid there's more tough climbing before the first of two sudden 16 per cent descents.

The first is simple. The second — with a cobbled ford at the foot of it - requires a little more foresight. Do you hit it at speed and hope for the

> best, take it steady and still hope for the best, or chicken-out and walk across the foot bridge? I'll let you decide.

Up and away from this perilous obstacle, you head skyward on another steep 17 per cent ramp, through a couple twists, then push on to the top of the barren moor.





The stats WHERE The climb leaves

Low Row heading north away from the B6270

**KOM Top Tip** Riding the ford will save a lot of time, if you dare!

# 3.3km 429m 186m 6%

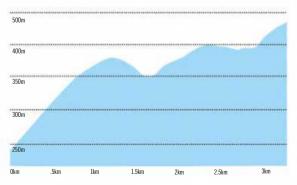
Length

height

Height gain

Average gradient

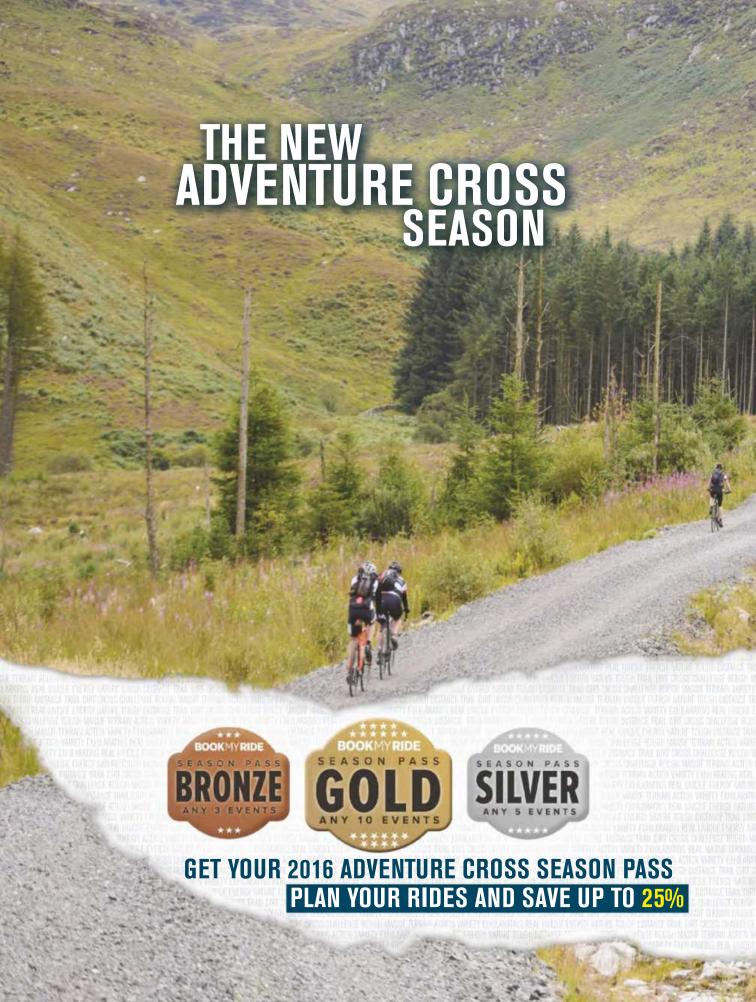
gradient



Strava file: www.strava.com/segments/8165072



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**15 May • Grizedale Grizzly** South Lakes, Cumbria

**10 July • Peak District Pioneer** Bakewell, Derbyshire

**18 Sept • Galloway Gallop** Dumfries, Scotland

**16 Oct • Lakeland Monster Miles** North Lakes, Cumbria

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# Paton bounces back after break

collarbone in September, Alex
Paton (Pedal Heaven) stormed to victory in his first race back, winning the 10th round of the London cyclo-cross League at the Cyclopark in Gravesend, Kent, on Sunday.

fter breaking his

The 25-year-old from
Dover crashed out in the
Dave Creasy Memorial track
meeting at the Lee Valley
Velodrome and has been out
of action for almost three
months, but is back on his
bike and fully intending to
ride the National Cyclo-Cross
Championships, in which he
was sixth last year.

Paton edged to victory by 10 seconds in the London League race, holding off Jonathan Dennis (Control Couriers) while Eastern League champion Matt Holmes (Arctic-Tacx) was just inches behind in third.

Louise Mahé (Ikon-Mazda) was the fastest female, securing her second victory in the league following victory in round five in October.

Conditions were tough across the country, with the Welsh League cancelled because of high winds. But the Lincolnshire League escaped cancellation, and Mark Cotton (Ellmore Factory Racing) battled through the conditions to win round 10 at the Winterton Showground near Scunthorpe to notch his sixth win in eight races at the venue.

Sam Burman (Team WNT) was best female, while Martin Kennedy bagged another win

Snowdon Sports supplies domestic results and reports to Cycling Weekly. Please send your information to results@snowdons. co.uk or call 0114 232 5555 and we will do our best to include them in our expanded racing section.

Rider of the week Chris Rathbone (Somerset RC)

South West League round 10

The 43-year-old mastered the wind and mud at Bovey Tracey to secure his eighth cross victory this season.

for Ellmore Factory Racing in the veterans' race.

Vet Chris Rathbone (Somerset RC) proved victorious in the South West League on a muddy course at Stover School near Bovey Tracey in Devon, winning by around a minute from over-50 vet Steve Davies (Hargroves Cycles) who chose to ride the regional league event rather than the National Trophy in Ipswich.

The Western League also endured tough conditions for round 10 in Cheltenham, where last year's runner-up in the National Championship Liam Killeen took the win.

The 33-year-old Specialized Racing man was a massive four and a half minutes clear of his nearest rival Jared Linden (Royal Dean Forest CC) while top woman was Dorothy Liviabella (Ride 24/7), a minute clear of runner-up Natasha Reddy (RP Racing Team).

Cyclocross

Sunday, November 29

British Cycling National Trophy Series round four (Trinity Park, Ipswich):

Elite men: 1. Ian Field (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley RT) 59.24; 2. l. Bibby (NFTO) +1.05; 3. P. Oldham (Hope Factory Racing) +1.16; 4. B. Sumner (Beeline-Gener 8) +1.23; 5. S. Roach (Team Raleigh-GAC) +1.24; 6. D. Fletcher (Pines Cycles-Felt-Enve) +1.35; 7. N. Craig (Scott Racing) +1.41; 8. N. Barnes (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley RT) +1.49; 9. S.

Crawforth (Hargrovés Cycles-Ridleý RT) +2.17.

Elite women: 1. Evie Richards (T-Mo Racing)

44:24.3; 2. A. Barnes (Betch-Super-Brentjens

MTB RT) +0.28; 3. A. Mellor (Oldfield-Paul Milnes

Cycles ERT) +0.32; 4. S. Wright (Strada-Sport)

James (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley RT) +2.06; 10. J.

Cycles ERI) +0.32; 4. S. Wright (Strada-Sport) +0.34; 5. H. Payton (Team Kinesis UK) +0.46; 6. B. Crumpton (Pearl Izumi-Sports Tours Int) +2.14; 7. A. Simpson (Hope Factory Racing) +2.17; 8. M. Pacios Pujadó (Zappi's Racing Team) +2.18; 9. D. Lee (Team Mulebar Girl-Sigma Sport) +2.40; 10. E. Wadsworth (Beeline-Gener8) +2.52.

**Under-23 men:** Nick Barnes (Hargroves Cycles-Ridlev RT)

Under-23 women: Evie Richards (T-Mo Racing)
Junior men: 1. Thomas Pidcock (OldfieldPaul Milnes Cycles ERT) 41.22; 2. M. Donovan
(Beacon Wheelers) +1.06; 3. H. Yates (Hargroves
Cycles) +1 38

Junior women: Sophie Wright (Strada-Sport) Veteran men 40-49: 1. Nick Craig (Scott Racing) 42.10; 2. J. Bryan (Zepnat RT) +0.17; 3. D. Atkins (Ride Coventry) +0.19.

Veteran men over-50: 1. Tim Gould (Zepnat RT-Lazer Helmets) 43.24; 2. C. Young (Pedalsport CC) +0.33; 3. G. Johnson (Sunset Cycles) +1.18.

Veteran women: 1. Maddi Smith (Bolsover & District CC) 40.44; 2. H. Pattinson (Solent Pirates) +1.11; 3. J. Field (CC Ashwell) +1.43. Under-16 boys: 1. Toby Barnes (Lichfield City CC) 28.16; 2. E. Cameron (Paul Milnes Bradford Olympic) +0.02; 3. B. Tulett (Beeline Gener 8) +0.35.

Under-16 girls: 1. Poppy Wildman (Nottingham Clarion CC) 31.17; 2. E. Grace (Welwyn Wheelers) +0.51; 3. A. Tacey (Leicestershire RC) +0.56.

Under-14 boys: 1. Emile Alexander (Lichfield City CC) 30.57; 2. A. Gregory (Leicestershire RC) +0.06; 3. O. Stockwell (Welwyn Wheelers)

Under-14 girls: 1. Ava Oxley-Szilagyi (PH-MAS VCUK Women's CT) 32.31; 2. A. Wayte (Zepnat RT) +0.32; 3. E. King (Towy Riders) +0.59.

Western League round 10 (Denfurlong Farm, Cheltenham):

Seniors: 1. Liam Killeen (Specialized Racing) 1:00.28; 2. J. Linden (Royal Dean Forest CC) +4.30; 3. K. Norfolk (Pedal0n) +5.18; 4. D. Barnaville (Bristol CX) + 1 lap; 5. A. Burridge (Bristol CX); 6. J. Britton (Bristol CX); 7. A. Siebert (Carnac Planet X); 8. J. Whateley (Bath Univ CC); 9. D. Arthur (unattached); 10. B. Anstie (Cadence RT).

Under-23s: James Whateley Juniors: Chris Rothwell (Ride 24/7) Veterans: Mark James (Jewson Polypipe) Women: Dorothy Liviabella (Ride 24/7) U16 boys: Josh Price (Ride 24/7) U16 girls: Ella Shaftoe (unattached)

Lincolnshire League round 10 (Winterton Showground, Scunthorpe):

Seniors: 1. Mark Cotton (Elmore Factory Racing); 2. D. Earth (JP Racing/Rally) +1.04; 3. B. Keirs (Borne Wheelers) +2.08; 4. A. Burns (Cross Trax) +2.38; 5. D. Beachill (Geared Up Cycles) +2.40; 6. K. Brown (Bolsover and District CC) +3.03; 7. S. Wood (Geared Up Cycles) +5.34; 8. R. Baldwin (Cottingham Coureurs) +5.49; 9. P. Hook (VC York) +6.02; 10. M. Naimby (Team WMT) +6.27

Juniors: Kieran Brown
Women: Sam Burman (Team WNT)
Vets: Martin Kennedy (Elmore Factory Racing)
Over 50: Graham Clark

Over 60: John Galway (Keswick Bikes)
U16 Boys: Robert McAndrew (Witham Wheelers)
U16 girl: Isabel Darvill (VC Lincoln)

London League round 10 (Cyclopark, Gravesend, Kent):

Seniors: 1. Alex Paton (Pedal Heaven)

58.23; 2. J. Dennis (Control Couriers) +0.10; 3. M. Holmes (Arctic-Tacx RT) same time; 4. C. Ansell (Team Corridori) +0.51; 5. M. Noble (Specialized Racing) +2.10; 6. J. Wakeling (BowlPhish-Bontrager Racing) +2.28; 7. J. Birks (VC Londres) +3.03; 8. D. Drake (VC Deal) same time; 9. H. Wood (unattached) +3.04; 10. D. Rees (Dulwich Paragon CC) +3.30.

Women: Louise Mahé (Ikon-Mazda) Juniors: George Finch

Vets 40-49: Roger Fowkes (Hillingdon)
Vets Over-50: Dougie Fox (Crawley Wheelers)
U16 Boys: Irfan Zaman (Bigfoot Go Ride)
U16 Girls: Megan MacMahon (WXC World Racing)

South West League round 10 (Stover School, Newton Abbot, Devon):

Seniors: 1. Chris Rathbone (Somerset RC); 2. S. Davies (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley) +1.00; 3. A. Parker (Mid-Devon CC) +2.30; 4. M. Durant (Somerset RC); 5. J. Bovey (Rocky Mountain); 6. 0. Yates (Somerset RC); 7. T. Carpenter (Elite Velo); 8. M. Lenney (Kernow Riders); 9. L. Hayward (Bike Motion Racing); 10. A. Dyment (North Hampshire RC).

Veterans 40-49: Chris Rathbone Veterans over-50: Steve Davies Juniors: George Armstrong (Taw Velo)

Women: Julia Elliott Women veterans: Catherine Cilburn U16 boys: Harry Birchill (Certini) U14 boys: Freddie Birchill (Team Certini)

Plean Cross: (Plean, Stirling, Scotland):

Senior men: 1. David Lines (Velosure-Starley-Primal); 2. M. Nicholson (Dooley's); 3. G. McDonald (Hope Factory Racing); 4. T. Owens (unattached); 5. S. Cooper (Glasgow Utd CC); 6. P. Carmichael (Bicycle Works); 7. B. Wilson (Billy Bilsland Cycles); 8. Eoghan Maguire (Fr Albannach); 9. D. Sharkey (Mid Argyle CC); 10. C. Sergeant (Law Wheelers).

Women: Eileen Roe (Wiggle-Honda)
Vets over-50: Brendan Roe (Leslie Bike Shop)

Vet women: Brenda Callander (Stirling Bike Shop)

Over-50 women: Catherine Logan (Walkers CC)

Vet women: Brenda Callander (Stirling Bike Shop)
Over-50 women: Catherine Logan (Walkers CC)
U16 boys: Logan Maclean (Stirling Bike Shop)
Under-16 girls: Estelle Fuller (Edinburgh RC)

Road racing

Saturday, November 28

Full Gas Winter Circuit Series round 4 (Lee Valley circuit, London):

E, 1, 2, 3: 1. Ben Sumner (Beeline Gener8); 2. J. Vaughan (VC Londres); 3. J. Outram (SP-Torm); 4. P. Hart (Southend Wheelers); 5. J. Brougham (London Dynamo); 6. T. Rowing (Abelio SFA RT); 7. N. Phillips (Rapha CC); 8. L. Davies (Broom Wagon RT); 9. L. Hindmarsh (unattached); 10. B. Drewett (Fareham Wheelers).

**4th Cat:** Sam Barnett (unattached) **Women:** Claire Hammond (London Dynamo)

South East League Winter Series round 2 (Cyclopark, Kent):

2, 3: 1. Frank Longstaff (Team Terminator);
2. A. Wallis (Ciclos Uno); 3. J. Freeman (Dulwich Paragon CC); 4. A. Strang (Dulwich Paragon CC); 5. K. de InBeule (Woolwich CC); 6. A. Milne (Rapha CC); 7. M. Leary (In Gear-Quickvit RT); 8. C. Kedros (WyndyMilla); 9. D. Egan (Cadence Cycle Performance); 10. M. Davies (Dulwich Paragon CC). Women: Charlie Constant (PMR @ Toachim House)



# Deals of the week

Cycling Weekly has teamed up with some of the UK's finest online cycling retailers to bring you Deals of the Week. All items featured are at special knock-down prices.

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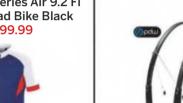
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Permanent working location: Longtown, Carlisle Start date: Jan 2016

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A period of training will be required in Hampshire (March)

Permanent working location: Longtown, Carlisle Start date: March 2016

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A period of training will be provided, in various locations. (March)

Base of work: Longtown, Carlisle Start Date: March 2016

Closing date for applications: 11/12/2015

# Hutch

Thinking of investing in disc brakes for your road bike? Think again, says the Doc

doctorhutch\_cycling@timeinc.com



ave I given you my road bike disc brakes lecture already? Well shut up, you're going to hear it again anyway.

Once upon a time bicycles didn't have brakes. This caused remarkably few difficulties, because early bicycles went rather slowly, and in any event early cyclists were a very different breed to the current lot, and were not given to excessive whingeing in the event of injury or death. They took their maiming without complaint, like gentlemen.

When brakes were introduced, they didn't really work. They just gave the manufacturer something to put on the advert, the retailer something to brag about, and the rider something to fiddle with while they waited for the inevitable impact. For example, one popular design consisted of a grip you twisted, which wound a bit of

string round a bar, which pulled a lever, which caused a brake pad to ever-so-gently rub against the tyre. Who wouldn't like that to play with to take their mind off impending disaster?

Since then, among other variations, we've had spoon brakes (useless), plunger brakes (useless), rod brakes (almost useless, but quaint), single-pivot side-pull caliper brakes (make a great squealing noise), centre-pull brakes (effective, quiet, cheap, and hence not very popular) and dual-pivot side-pull calipers (very effective, quiet, generally quite expensive.)

### **Enter the disc brake**

Somewhere in all of that, aided very much by the move away from steel wheel rims, brakes became reasonably good. Most particularly to the point, the problem with stopping a road bike became very much one of friction between the tyre and the road rather than friction between the brake block and the rim. To put that another way, it's possible to lock up the wheels of a modern road bike any time you want and on more or less any surface.

Into this arena arrive disc brakes. I have disc brakes on my mountain bike, and very fine they are too. Better mud clearance, for example, is something much to be admired. And discs can stop you better on bikes with big tyres as well, since there's potentially more grip available.

But on a road bike, not very much of this is applicable. You'll be able to lock your wheels up and slide sideways into the ditch just as



effectively with discs as with calipers. "But they give you better braking modulation," cry the disc brake fans. Well, yes. One's whole life one has been running into people demanding better braking modulation.

I'm no Luddite. Granted, I wasn't keen on 11-speed. Or 10-speed, or 9-speed. Or Strava, GPS, oversized bottom brackets or electronic gears. But I liked threadless headsets the moment I saw them, so there.

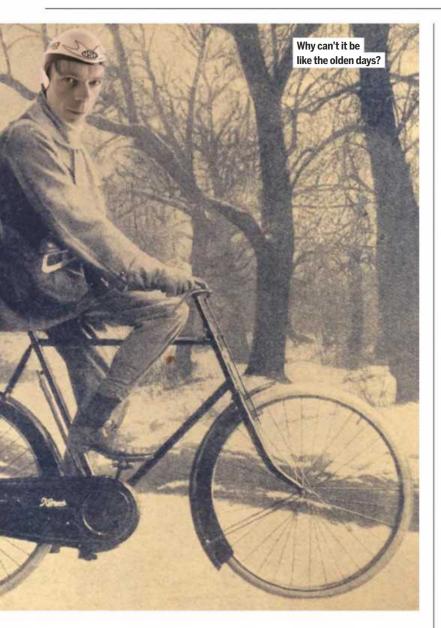
We're going to get discs whether we like it or not. Not because they're better, but because there is a thirst for innovation on a machine whose last proper leap of technology was

# Acts of Cycling Stupidity

Word reaches me of a friend of a friend who was a recent and early adopter of tubeless tyre technology. After getting some suitable tyres and wheels, and following a certain amount of faffing about putting sealant liquid in the tyres, he was able to enjoy the smooth ride he that had been promised.

He was also able to almost eliminate punctures as well, since the liquid automatically sealed around any of the flints that pierced the tyre.

Then he got a proper blowout, caused by a cut to the sidewall. Easy to fix — a tyre boot and an inner tube would sort that. And it did. Right until he inflated the tube, and it was instantly punctured by all the little flints that were still stuck in the tyre.



the pneumatic tyre in the 1880s. Everything since that date has just been accessorising.

Without wanting to sound too curmudgeonly about this (though I appreciate that that particular horse may already have left the stable), the best thing about cycling is the cycling. I've been at this for long enough to have gained four sprockets, found a

"We're going to get disc brakes whether we like it or not" saddle that doesn't anaesthetise me from the waist down and seen the introduction of carbon frames that don't require sticking back together with Araldite every six months. But it hasn't really made cycling different, or even more comfortable in any practical way.

I guarantee no one will ever say, "Do you remember before disc brakes? God, it was awful. I don't know how we managed." And I know that because no one has ever said anything analogous since the 1880s. Even then it was immediately followed by, "What's that strange hissing noise? Hey! The tyre's got all soft! No one told me about this!"

# GREAT INVENTIONS OF CYCLING

# **Reg Harris** 1920-1992

Reg Harris was, for decades, the name that went at the end of the sarcastically shouted rhetorical question, "Who the bleedin' 'ell do you think you are...?" He was the Sir Chris Hoy of his day.

And how. He was match sprint world amateur champion in 1947, won two Olympic silvers in 1948 despite having to complete most of his preparation wearing a plaster cast after a crash a few weeks earlier.

Harris spent much of his career at odds with the authorities, and 1948 was no exception — he was dropped from the British team for refusing to join a training camp in London, and only reinstated after a public outcry. This was a much more impressive achievement before Twitter.

He was professional world champion in 1949, 50, 51 and 54. He broke the 1km time trial record on five occasions.

He might have won even more had his career not been delayed by World War Two — Harris served in North Africa until the tank he was driving was destroyed by enemy fire. He was the only survivor and was invalided out of the army. Less than a year later he won the British national title.

If you know nothing else about Reg Harris, you need to know that he came out of retirement and, in 1974, won the British title again, at the age of 54.

In a final crowning glory for his career, he was stopped for running a red light on his bike in the 1980s by a police officer who said, "Who do you think you are, Reg Harris?"



# Pinarello Espada

The Italian answer to Chris Boardman's Lotus superbike was Pinarello's finest hour, says Simon Smythe

he 1990s was the golden era of the aerodynamic carbon monocoque. After the adoption of the material by cycling in the late 1980s, bicycle designers quickly realised they had carte blanche to create whatever shape they found to be most aerodynamic, no matter how outlandish. At least that was until the Union Cycliste Internationale in 2000 enforced its 1996 Lugano Charter, banning any bike without the traditional diamond-shaped frame.

Buoyed by the reaction to Chris Boardman's Lotus when he won the Olympic pursuit in 1992, Pinarello set about making its own futuristic carbon monocoque for Miguel Indurain, who was eyeing the Hour record with a view to reclaiming it for Grand Tour winners from the time trial specialists like Boardman.

Fausto Pinarello told *Cycling Weekly* when we visited Treviso in 2013: "The Espada was the first time [frame builder and designer] Elvio Borghetto and I had worked with carbon-fibre. We did a good job with some people from Lamborghini to make a special design. We had the possibility to go to the wind tunnel and from that time we started to develop technologically more than ever before."

Before the Espada, the challenge for Pinarello was to streamline the hulking Spaniard. "For him the problem was, never change the saddle [position]," said Fausto. "He was never aerodynamic. We tried to do things with him, but no way. But it was OK because he was strong."

# Ready for the record

Finally bike and rider were ready, and on September 2 1994, four weeks after he

won his fourth Tour de France, Indurain took the start line at the Velodrome du Lac, Bordeaux. In his sights, ironically, was an Hour record that was set on a homemade bike with bearings salvaged from a washing machine.

Indurain easily beat Graeme Obree's distance, becoming the first man to break 53 kilometres. He liked the Espada so much that Pinarello built him a roadgoing version that he used to similarly devastating effect in time trials.

But the reign of Indurain and Espada as Hour record holders was short lived. Tony Rominger bettered him the very next month, and the month after that Rominger rode an unbelievable 55.291km. Indurain tried to recapture the record in Colombia at altitude in 1995 but was off the pace from the start.

For Fausto Pinarello, that didn't matter. Although it didn't last long at the top, the Espada is still his favourite bike ever. "You can characterise me as the Espada," he said. "And Miguel is Pinarello."



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